

MASTER PLAN  
MAY 2011

# CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK



N.C. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION



Hickory Nut Falls

MASTER PLAN  
APRIL 2011

# CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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...AND THE COUNTLESS CITIZENS WHO  
 HAVE SUPPORTED AND CONTINUE TO  
 SUPPORT THE PARK.





North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Division of Parks and Recreation

Beverly Eaves Perdue,

Lewis R. Ledford, Director

Dee Freeman, Secretary

April 27, 2011

Friends and Supporters of Chimney Rock State Park:

The recently established Chimney Rock State Park encompasses one of North Carolina's most iconic landscapes and offers tremendous potential and challenges for creating a world-class state park within the Hickory Nut Gorge. The intent of the state park system has been to craft a 100-year vision, a 25-year master plan and a five-year action plan. The master plan builds upon the unique history of the region while combining natural resource protection with public enjoyment.

Authorized by the 2005 N.C. General Assembly, the state park has grown to more than 4,000 acres, including its signature landmark purchased in 2007 from the Morse family who owned and operated the 996-acre Chimney Rock Park tourist destination. Throughout the land acquisition process – which is ongoing – the park has received significant support from the General Assembly, nonprofit land conservancies, the state's conservation trust funds, nearby communities and North Carolina's citizens.

Aside from the abundance of rare species and habitats, Chimney Rock State Park offers outstanding outdoor experiences, including spectacular vistas from Chimney Rock Mountain and an extensive network of trails for all skill levels. Visitors can hike to the base of Hickory Nut Falls, one of the highest waterfalls in the eastern United States, and enjoy a myriad of special events. The state parks system will continue to work in partnership with local communities and regional stakeholders to support activities, events and visitor opportunities in this cherished tourism destination.

This master plan is a blueprint for long-term development of facilities and protection of critically important natural resources. Such a plan is an organic document that evolves as the park grows and knowledge is gained about the resources and public use. With the plan's completion, Chimney Rock State Park enters a new era with a bold vision. Greenways Inc., a Durham-based landscape architecture firm, developed this master plan in full consultation with state parks staff and the community through a participatory planning process. The result is a long-range, attainable plan balancing outdoor recreation and stewardship.


At all state parks, we are committed to our mission of protecting natural resources, educating our visitors about those resources, and providing quality outdoor recreation. Chimney Rock State Park offers us an outstanding opportunity to fulfill those objectives. That commitment, the continued support of our partners and thoughtful planning will combine for a lasting legacy.

Sincerely,

Lewis R. Ledford

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# SUMMARY OF THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

The purpose of a master plan is to serve as a long-term guide for the development of park facilities, recreation opportunities, and natural resource protection. It includes an analysis of cultural, scenic, recreational, geologic, and natural resources as well as site conditions, public demand and interest, and development recommendations. The master plan is structured within the scope of a 25-year development plan, and is intended to evolve as the park grows and more knowledge is gained about the park's natural resources.

Shortly after the acquisition of Chimney Rock Park by the State of North Carolina in 2005, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation selected Greenways Incorporated of Durham, N.C. as the design consultant for preparation of the park's first master plan. Greenways Incorporated and their engineering subconsultant, McKim and Creed, P.A., were charged with examining Chimney Rock State Park as a whole and evaluating opportunities and constraints for proposed park facilities. The consultant team performed a thorough site inventory and analysis in order to fully understand the existing conditions of the park as well as future park development opportunities. Existing regional planning documents were examined, as well as recreational usage trends based on the North Carolina Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009-2013. Most importantly, the consultant worked closely with the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation staff to refine a program of use for the park.

Three initial design alternatives were publicly presented in May 2010. The alternatives differed primarily in the extent of development proposed (see Chapter 8: Proposed Park Alternatives). The public was invited to attend an open house meeting held at the Town of Lake Lure. Public comment was also received via U.S. mail and email. All comments received were compiled and are part of this master plan. The input received was instructive and was used to guide the master planning effort. A draft master plan was developed to incorporate public comment and staff input. Upon completion of the draft master plan, a second public comment period commenced on November 29 and concluded on December 13, 2010. State parks staff and the planning team also made a presentation of the draft master plan to the Chimney Rock State Park Advisory Committee.

Finally, this master plan was developed in response to a specific program of public access, natural resource protection, and use that is consistent with other North Carolina State Parks. The planning team also took into consideration the unique opportunities and constraints of the Hickory Nut Gorge region. The master plan is based upon the best mapping data available at the time of its preparation (See Resources and References: Digital Mapping Data). This data is not survey quality; therefore, more detailed soil, geotechnology, topographic, hydrological, ecological and other studies may be warranted in future phases of design in order to fully assess feasibility. Since planning is a dynamic process, the availability of more detailed information over time may result in a final built product that is different than that depicted in this master plan.



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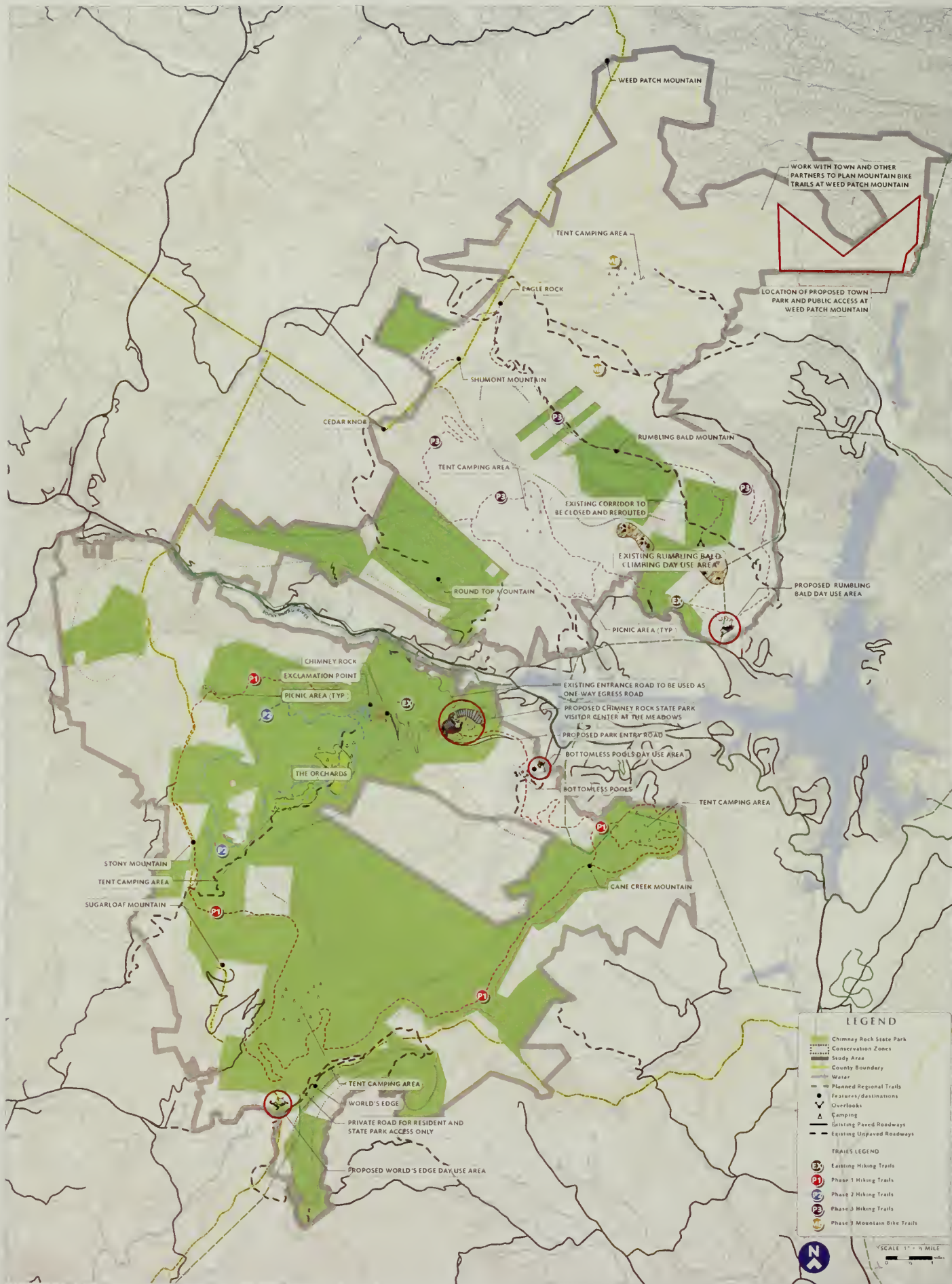
# CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK



## *EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*

N.C. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF PARKS AND RECREATION

# CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK MASTER PLAN







# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Chimney Rock State Park is a world-class destination park located on the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains in southwestern North Carolina. The state park is comprised of notable landscapes and significant ecological resources, most of which are located within the Hickory Nut Gorge region. The 4,531-acre park straddles four counties: Buncombe, Henderson, Polk and Rutherford.

Chimney Rock State Park is a tremendous natural resource, containing high quality, intact, and unique natural communities, rare species of plants, animals, rock outcrops, steep slopes, balds and waterfalls. The state park contains a diverse combination of flora and fauna due to its proximity within two different physiographic regions, the southern Blue Ridge Mountains and the Piedmont, and encompasses eight significant natural heritage areas, recognized for the presence of rare species and high quality natural communities. The state park also contains a number of important natural communities characterized by vegetation composition and appearance, wildlife, topography, hydrology, soils and other abiotic factors.

## VISION

This master plan is structured within a 100-year vision, 25-year master plan and 5-year action plan for Chimney Rock State Park. The vision for the future of the state park builds upon the unique history of the former Chimney Rock Park while conserving important natural areas and meeting the needs of future park visitors. The following statement articulates the vision for the state park:

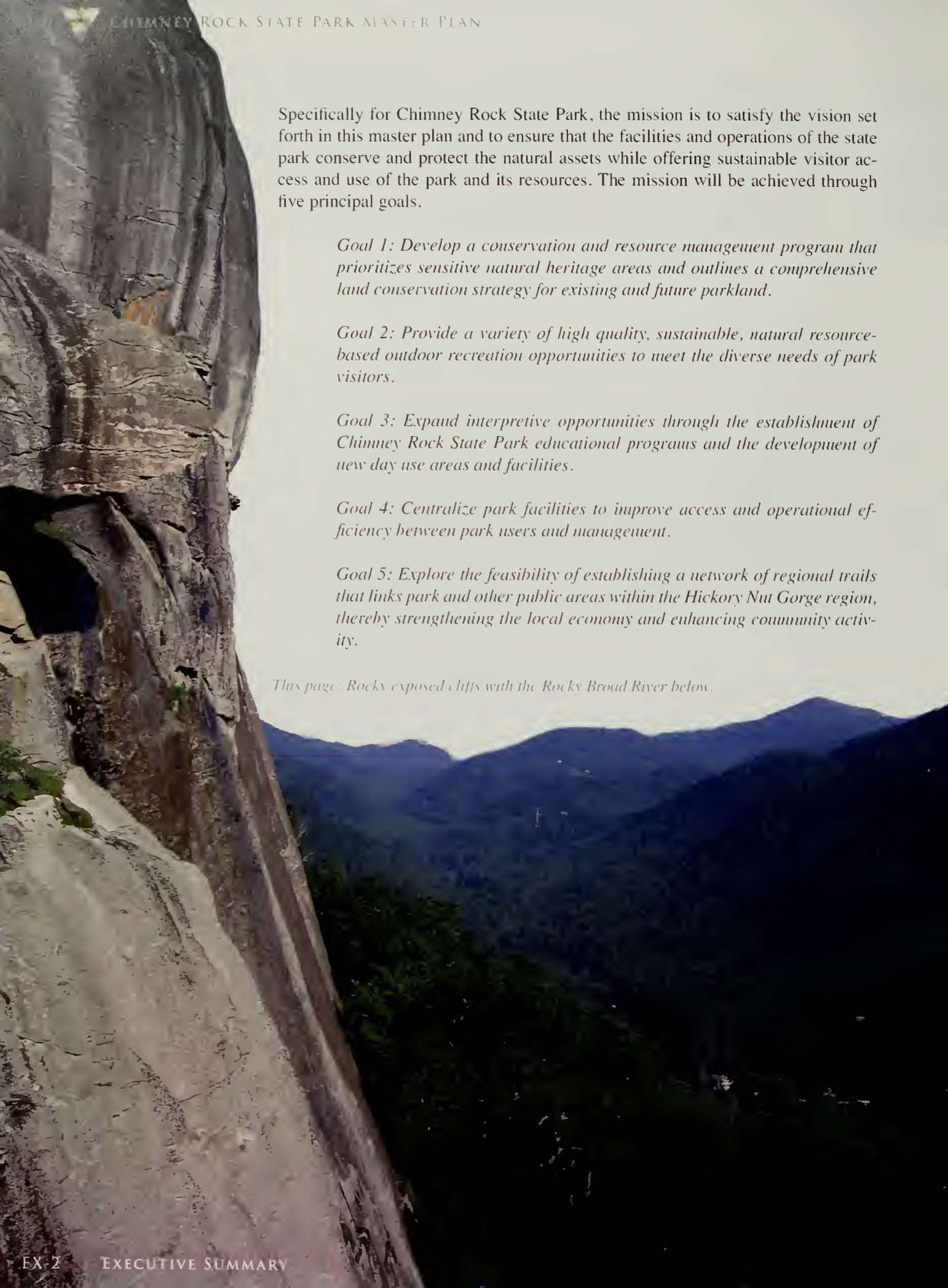
Chimney Rock State Park will be a destination that enhances the stewardship and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources; a place that provides a range of nature-based recreation experiences consistent with the ecological character and scenic beauty of Hickory Nut Gorge; which supports interpretive programs that educate and inform visitors about the park's unique flora and fauna, distinct geology, sensitive and endangered species, and conservation and preservation practices.

## MISSION AND GOALS

The N.C. State Parks System exists for the enjoyment, education, health and inspiration of all citizens and visitors. The mission of the state parks system is to:

*"Conserve and protect representative examples of the natural beauty, ecological features and recreational resources of statewide significance; to provide outdoor recreational opportunities in a safe and healthy environment; and to provide environmental education opportunities that promote stewardship of the state's natural heritage."*





Specifically for Chimney Rock State Park, the mission is to satisfy the vision set forth in this master plan and to ensure that the facilities and operations of the state park conserve and protect the natural assets while offering sustainable visitor access and use of the park and its resources. The mission will be achieved through five principal goals.

*Goal 1: Develop a conservation and resource management program that prioritizes sensitive natural heritage areas and outlines a comprehensive land conservation strategy for existing and future parkland.*

*Goal 2: Provide a variety of high quality, sustainable, natural resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the diverse needs of park visitors.*

*Goal 3: Expand interpretive opportunities through the establishment of Chimney Rock State Park educational programs and the development of new day use areas and facilities.*

*Goal 4: Centralize park facilities to improve access and operational efficiency between park users and management.*

*Goal 5: Explore the feasibility of establishing a network of regional trails that links park and other public areas within the Hickory Nut Gorge region, thereby strengthening the local economy and enhancing community activity.*

*This page: Rocky exposed cliffs with the Rocky Broad River below.*



## PARK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Chimney Rock State Park development program will satisfy the vision, mission and goals through three principal strategies: *Conservation Management*; *Education and Stewardship*; and *Access and Recreation*.



*Protecting natural assets*

### CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT

Where there is a high concentration of rare species and wildlife habitat as well as significant natural features, construction of facilities will be limited. These areas will provide opportunities for hiking, nature study, photography, scientific research, and other appropriate low-impact activities.



*Providing opportunities for learning and stewardship*

### EDUCATION AND STEWARDSHIP

Part of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation's mission is to provide opportunities for learning and stewardship of natural resources. To accomplish this within Chimney Rock State Park, interpretive and educational facilities and programming will be developed to serve students, teachers, university researchers and the general public.



*Providing access to unique sites and recreation activities*

### ACCESS AND RECREATION

Chimney Rock State Park offers exceptional opportunities for access to scenic vistas, breathtaking landscapes and challenging outdoor activity. Specific land and resource areas of the park will be available for a diverse range of outdoor recreation, environmental education and public use. These activities will be encouraged and supported through programs that promote sustainable access and use. It is critically important that recreation areas of the park be capable of supporting use for generations to come.

## CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK LANDS

To accomplish park expansion, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will continue its practice of partnering with conservation organizations, local governments and landowners to acquire, conserve and protect additional lands that fulfill the purpose of Chimney Rock State Park. Natural resource protection, scenic viewshed preservation, outdoor recreation and public access are some of the primary motives for pursuing additional lands and resources for Chimney Rock State Park.

## VISITOR CENTER

A proposed 6,500 square foot visitor center building will be constructed on the southern end of the Meadows. The visitor center is comprised of a new building, attraction ticket office, expanded public parking, park operations and management offices. The building will be designed and implemented using green building strategies to attain Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification. The building will support visitor reception and lobby, classrooms, offices, exhibit space, concessions, public toilets and storage. The design program will incorporate low impact construction methods such as the use of native construction materials, solar and geothermal heating and cooling (where feasible), rainwater collection, and stormwater best management practices.



### ATTRACTION TICKET OFFICE

For visitors wanting to ascend to the top of Chimney Rock Mountain from the Meadows, a new ticket office will be constructed adjacent to the proposed visitor center, and connected to the visitor center via a covered walkway. The ticket office will be designed and implemented using the same environmental principles as the visitor center.

### PUBLIC PARKING

Public parking at the Meadows will utilize permeable paving to reduce stormwater runoff where feasible. The Meadows will accommodate more than 300 cars, 20 busses, RVs, and vehicles with trailers, and bicycles. Construction will involve realignment of the existing entrance roadway, minimal clearing of existing wooded areas, and the installation of stormwater infiltration areas to capture first flush flows from the parking areas.

### PARK OPERATIONS AND MANAGEMENT OFFICES

In addition to the visitor center building, new park operation, management, and maintenance offices will be constructed at the eastern end of the Meadows. The purpose of these offices is to centralize park operations staff, maintenance equipment, and supplies. These offices will be designed and implemented using the same environmental principles as the visitor center.

### VISITOR CENTER AT THE MEADOWS







## ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

A new access and circulation strategy is proposed for Chimney Rock State Park that includes support for auto, transit, bicycle and pedestrian travel. One of the primary goals of the new access and circulation strategy is to help alleviate automobile congestion on U.S. Route 64/74A through Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure.

### NEW STATE PARK ENTRANCE ROAD

A new state park entry road will be constructed from the Town of Lake Lure, connecting to the lower portion of Proctor Road. From its intersection with Proctor Road, the new road will feature a split inbound and outbound lane design to minimize impact to the existing forest canopy. The roadway will be built to modern standards, with bicycle lanes on both the inbound and outbound lanes. The lower portion of Proctor Road will be widened to accommodate new traffic flow. The current entrance road from Chimney Rock Village will be transformed into a state park exit road.

### HICKORY NUT GORGE TRANSIT CIRCULATOR

A transit circulator, operated independently from Chimney Rock State Park, is proposed for the Hickory Nut Gorge region. The circulator will be similar to those operated at United States National Parks, such as the Island Explorer at Arcadia National Park. The circulator will make use of fuel-efficient vehicles (i.e. natural gas or electric powered busses) and will include transit stops in Chimney Rock Village, Town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock State Park. The circulator will encourage visitors to park their cars at designated locations and board fuel efficient busses for transport throughout the region to popular destinations. With a circulator in place, it is hoped that vehicle congestion throughout the Hickory Nut Gorge region will be minimized, air quality will be improved, and traffic flow will be more efficient.

### UTILITY CORRIDOR

New utility lines will be installed in conjunction with the construction of a new entrance road from the Town of Lake Lure to the Meadows at Chimney Rock State Park. A new water line, along with a pump station, will be installed and connected to the Town of Lake Lure water supply. A new sanitary sewer line will also be installed from the Meadows to the Town of Lake Lure to service the new visitor center, and park operations and management offices. A new, modern communications line will also be installed to deliver improved voice, high-speed data and internet into the state park.

## DAY USE AREAS

Three new day use areas will be built at Bottomless Pools, World's Edge and Rumbling Bald. For all proposed day use areas, buildings will be designed and implemented using sustainable construction strategies.

### BOTTOMLESS POOLS DAY USE AREA

The Bottomless Pools attraction will be developed into a state park day use area. The historic home associated with Bottomless Pools will be used as a contact station and information center. Some of the original viewing platforms will be restored and reopened for public access and use. The existing trail system will also be restored and constructed to provide new observation platforms for viewing of the famed Bottomless Pools. A public parking lot will support parking for up to 60 cars. Bottomless Pools will provide parking for connections to Chimney Rock State Park trails and Hickory Nut Gorge regional trails.

### WORLD'S EDGE DAY USE AREA

The World's Edge day use area will include an overlook, public parking, a contact station, trail concessions, and picnic areas.



*Bottomless Pools*

### RUMBLING BALD DAY USE AREA

An undersized day use area already exists off of Boys Camp Road on the southwest side of Rumbling Bald Mountain. The existing day use area will be improved to support the increase in vehicle parking and a second day use area will be built east of the existing Rumbling Bald climbing day use area. The proposed secondary location off of Boys Camp Road will provide additional accommodation for rock climbing and other passive recreation activities. This new day use area will include public parking for up to 60 cars, picnic areas, toilet building, concessions, and short loop trails for hiking.



*View from Rumbling Bald*



## ATTRACTION FACILITIES

The attraction at Chimney Rock State Park is comprised of many features and facilities formerly operated by the Morse family, most of which are now operated by a concessionaire to the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. The following describes the current status and improvements for key elements of the attraction.

### ATTRACTION ENTRANCE ROAD

The entrance road from the Meadows to the Cliff Dwellers gift shop will require improvement in order to accommodate two-way auto and bus traffic. This will include widening portions of the road, reinforcing and/or rebuilding retaining walls, and reworking drainage systems.

### ELEVATOR AND TUNNEL

The historic tunnel and elevator that takes visitors from Cliff Dwellers to the Sky Lounge is being upgraded and improved with modern elevator equipment in 2011.

### CLIFF DWELLERS

The Cliff Dwellers gift shop is generally in good condition but will require some renovation to the exterior and interior.

### SKY LOUNGE

The Sky Lounge will be improved in 2011 and later adapted into an interpretive area. The existing shop and food service area will be moved to other venues throughout the state park.

### OLD ROCK CAFÉ

The Old Rock Café, located in Chimney Rock Village, will be completely renovated and modernized. The building's interior and exterior will be repainted and refinished, and the restrooms will be expanded to accommodate more visitors.

### ATTRACTION TRAILS

The trails of the attraction are one of the most important features of Chimney Rock State Park. Many of these trails are worn and in need of restoration and repair. It will be important to improve these trails to meet minimum standards for public use and safety, in accordance with State of North Carolina guidelines.

## STATE PARK HIKING TRAILS

New long distance hiking trails will be developed as part of the expanded Chimney Rock State Park. Trails systems in the southern and northern part of the state park will be connected to the Hickory Nut Gorge regional trail system. Trails of various difficulty, length, and interest are proposed to provide a diverse experience that can be enjoyed by visitors regardless of their abilities. Families, senior citizens, and experienced hikers will have the option to select and plan their trip: from as little as a one to two hour hike, to overnight hikes with primitive camping.





## CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK HIKING TRAILS

The Chimney Rock Mountain Perimeter Trail is envisioned as an extended, multi-day experience for long distance hikers. This 15-mile moderate to difficult hiking trail will extend from the Orchards on Chimney Rock Mountain to the base of Sugarloaf Mountain, then to World's Edge, and along the ridgeline of Cane Creek Mountain. Along the route, three proposed primitive campgrounds will accommodate those who wish to experience this challenging multi-day hike.

## SKYLINE AND CLIFF TRAILS

It is important that Chimney Rock State Park balance the conservation, protection and preservation of natural resources with access and enjoyment of those resources. The existing design of the upper Skyline and Cliff trails cannot be properly managed to support public access and use, due to environmental factors, concerns regarding public health, safety and welfare, and budget constraints.

A new alignment for the Skyline Trail will be established from Exclamation Point along the top of Chimney Rock Mountain to designated observation areas on top of the mountain. Observation platforms will be constructed to provide views of the top of Hickory Nut Falls, Hickory Nut Gorge and Lake Lure. The proposed trail will be constructed inside the existing tree line and not on the cliff faces of Chimney Rock Mountain. The Cliff trail could be opened in the future in cooperation with a contractor who guides adventure tours, such as a via ferrata.

A proposed trail will also be developed connecting the new visitor center at the Meadows to Bottomless Pools. This trail will link with local greenways so visitors can access adjacent regional activities in both Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure.



*New alignment for Skyline and Cliff trails will be more environmentally friendly.*

## NORTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK HIKING TRAILS

New hiking trails are proposed for development on the southwest side of Rumbling Bald, between Boys Camp Road and the top of Rumbling Bald Mountain. Hiking trails in northern Chimney Rock State Park are proposed around southern Rumbling Bald, Shumont Mountain, and Eagle Rock. These trails will range from moderate to difficult in terms of accessibility. The trails will be developed in a series of loops in order to provide a level of challenge for various hikers. Backcountry trails are proposed at the far reaches north of Rumbling Bald, where hike-in primitive camping will be available. Backcountry trails in this location are more remote and further from day use areas. Connections to Weed Patch Mountain, and proposed mountain biking trails, will also be possible from this area.

## HICKORY NUT GORGE REGIONAL TRAILS

A number of regional trails are proposed throughout Hickory Nut Gorge. Many of these trails are proposed to link into and through Chimney Rock State Park. Regional trails that link to the state park will be developed in coordination with the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

## STATE PARK ACTIVITIES

In addition to hiking trails, Chimney Rock State Park will support other natural resource-based activities where visitors can access and enjoy a variety of outdoor pursuits.



### ROCK CLIMBING

Chimney Rock State Park will host one of the premiere mountain climbing areas in the southeastern United States. Existing trails and day use parking areas on Boys Camp Road will be improved to accommodate peak season visitation. Climbing areas in the state park will be permitted along the southern facing cliffs of Rumbling Bald Mountain and the boulder fields at Rumbling Bald owned by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. Additional climbing areas in the park will be considered in a comprehensive climbing and bouldering plan.



### MOUNTAIN BIKING

A single-track mountain biking trail system is proposed in the vicinity of Weed Patch Mountain. A minimum 10-mile network of trails is recommended, with opportunities for primitive camping. Mountain bike enthusiasts will access Weed Patch Mountain through a parcel owned by the Town of Lake Lure from Buffalo Creek Road. The Town of Lake Lure plans to develop a park and trailhead facilities at this location. Management of the mountain bike trails will be in partnership with the Town of Lake Lure, the mountain bike community, and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.



### PRIMITIVE CAMPING

All proposed camping will be primitive, with access to the trail network. Four primitive campgrounds will be located throughout Chimney Rock State Park. Visitors will access primitive campgrounds by permit and will be required to backpack to the campsites. Primitive campgrounds will be located at:

- *Orchards – top of Chimney Rock Mountain*
- *World's Edge*
- *Cane Creek Mountain*
- *Rumbling Bald Mountain*

## PICNICKING

Picnicking will be made available to park visitors at all day use areas and at the visitor center. Some picnic areas are proposed along the hiking trails in north and south Chimney Rock State Park. These more remote picnicking areas will be implemented based on demand and operational considerations.

## INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

In addition to the educational facilities proposed at the visitor center, there are a variety of opportunities to interpret the natural heritage of the park and the region. The development of outdoor exhibits at day use areas and along hiking trails will form an interpretive network. The network will be self-guided or organized by park staff as guided hikes or educational programs. The scenery in Chimney Rock State Park will be enjoyed from vistas and viewing platforms that incorporate interpretive signage. The overlooks will be strategically located along trails and at some day use areas.



# 1 SITE CONTEXT & HISTORY

## SITE DESCRIPTION

Chimney Rock State Park is part of the larger Southern Appalachian Mountain range that extends from northern Alabama to northern Virginia. It is located on the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains in southwestern North Carolina, situated within a band of mountains and foothills, known geologically as the Inner Piedmont Belt. The park is 25 miles southeast of Asheville, North Carolina.

Chimney Rock State Park is comprised of notable landscapes and significant ecological physiographic regions. Portions of the state park are located in Buncombe, Rutherford, Polk and Henderson counties, and include the following: Chimney Rock Mountain, Hickory Nut Falls, World's Edge, and portions of Rumbling Bald, Stony Mountain, and Cane Creek Mountain. A 4,531-acre expanse, Chimney Rock State Park straddles two physiographic regions (Blue Ridge Mountains and Piedmont), as can be seen in Figure 1.1. The regional context and park study area can be seen in Figures 1.2 and 1.3.

Most of the state park is also located within Hickory Nut Gorge, a geographic region which extends northwest to southeast from the Continental Divide south to Lake Lure. The gorge is carved by the Rocky Broad River, which flows between the exposed granite domes and cliffs of Round Top Mountain and Chimney Rock Mountain, along U.S. Route 64/74A. The park contains one of the largest concentrations of rare species within the Blue Ridge Mountains and is known to support over 90 rare plant species, of which three dozen have state or federal designations. The Hickory Nut Gorge Macrosite comprises the entire length of the gorge and covers nearly 30,000 acres in Buncombe, Henderson, Polk, and Rutherford counties. It is significant for containing rare plant, animal, and natural communities. With its large size and low degree of fragmentation, the macrosite has a good prospect for long-term viability. This viability is increased by excellent landscape connections southward along the Blue Ridge Escarpment towards South Carolina, as well as northward and eastward toward the South Mountains. Such large, unfragmented landscapes provide benefits to both common and rare species at the local level as well as at larger scales. The park will play a prominent role in landscape-scale protection, as less than one-third of the macrosite has any level of formal protection.

Lake Lure, the area's most notable water feature, is found on the eastern edge of the park. The lake, owned by the Town of Lake Lure, encompasses 720 acres, with 27 miles of shoreline. None of the park property adjoins Lake Lure, but the park provides excellent views of the lake.

## HISTORY OF CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

Originally named Hickory Nut Gorge State Park, Chimney Rock State Park is one of eight state parks established as part of the 2002 New Parks for a New Century initiative undertaken by the North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation. This initiative was launched in conjunction with the North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources' "One North Carolina Naturally" program that sought protection and stewardship of the state's most important natural resource areas. In 2005, with tremendous public support, the North Carolina General Assembly authorized the creation of Hickory Nut Gorge State Park. Early acquisitions for the new state park included a 1,568-acre tract known as World's Edge, land on Rumbling Bald Mountain, and land near the Bat Cave community.

FIGURE 1.1: CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK STATEWIDE CONTEXT



FIGURE 1.2: STUDY AREA REGIONAL CONTEXT

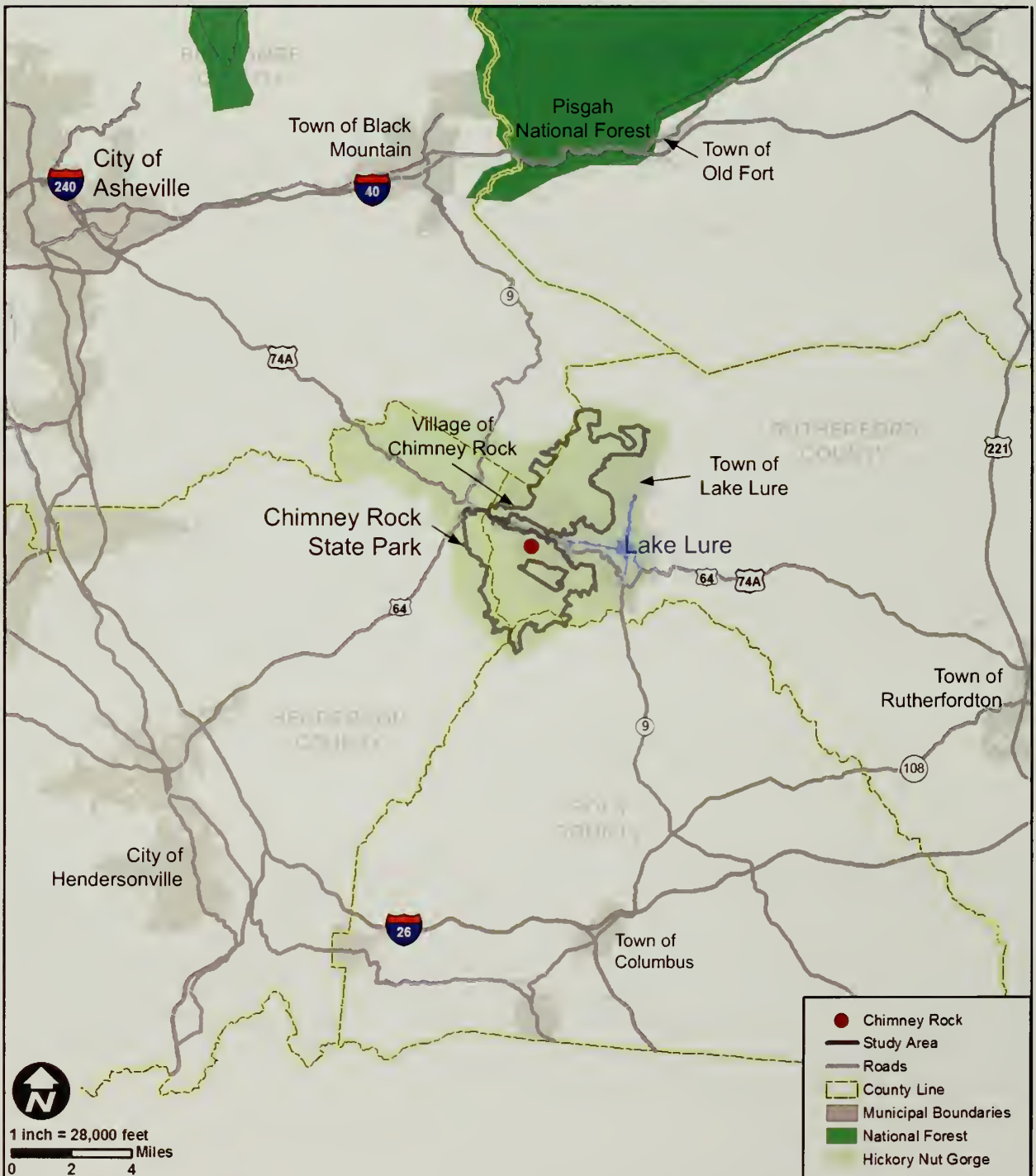
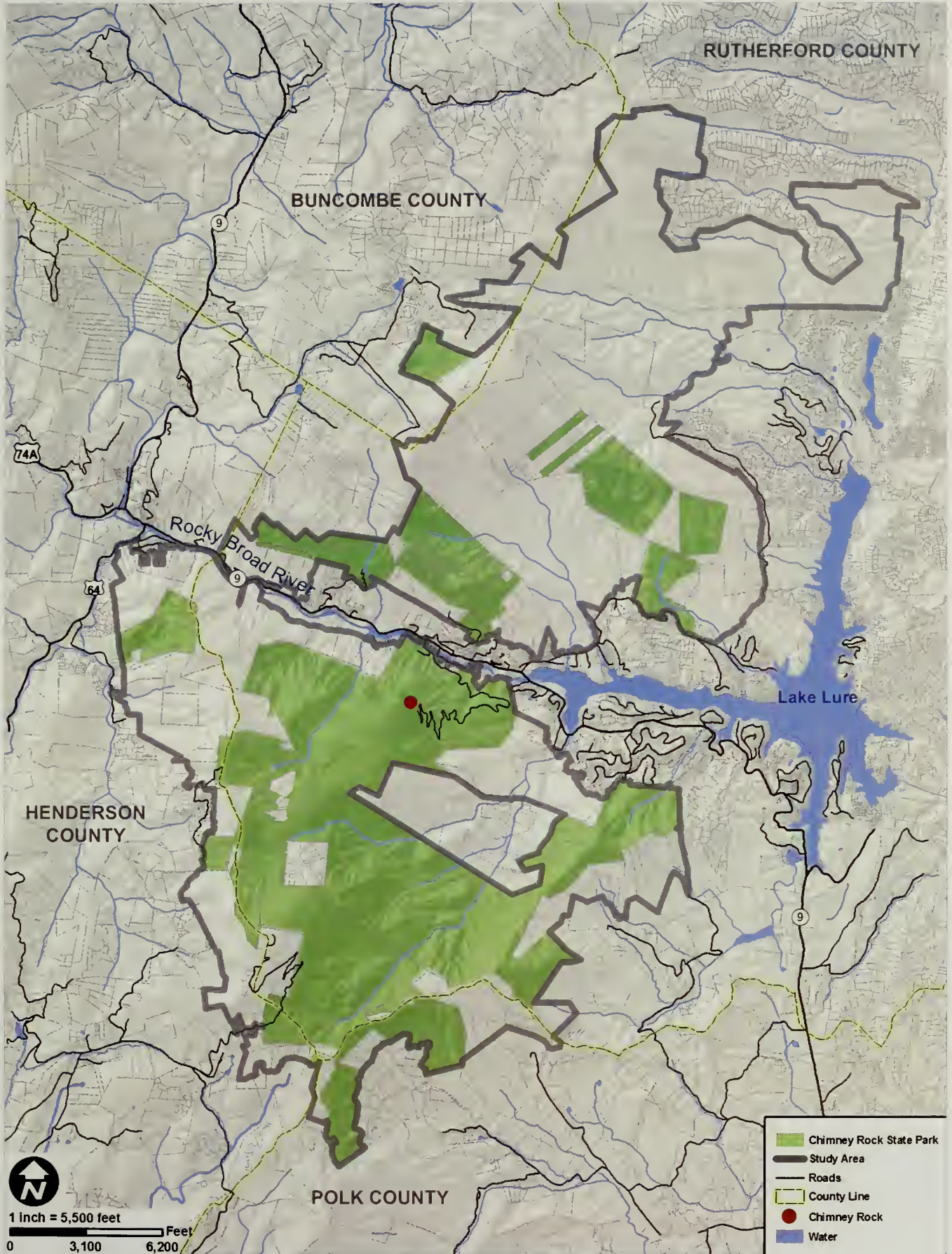






FIGURE 1.3: STUDY AREA PARK LANDS\*



\*As of February 2011



In 2006, the Morse family, owners of the private Chimney Rock Park, offered their 996-acre park for sale. Shortly thereafter, the State of North Carolina began negotiations to purchase the private park and, in May 2007, completed the purchase as an addition to the growing Hickory Nut Gorge State Park. During that same year, the North Carolina General Assembly authorized \$15 million to support acquisition of additional property at Hickory Nut Gorge State Park. Being traditional for North Carolina state parks to be named after a dominant natural feature, the park name was changed from Hickory Nut Gorge State Park to Chimney Rock State Park through legislative authorization later in 2007.

## HISTORY OF THE FORMER CHIMNEY ROCK PARK

Jerome B. "Rome" Freeman was the first owner of Chimney Rock, purchasing 67 acres that included the iconic Chimney Rock, Hickory Nut Falls and the cliffs of Chimney Rock Mountain in 1870. Freeman was the first to have conceived the idea of a public park to celebrate the unique geology and spectacular views afforded from Chimney Rock Mountain. By 1887, Freeman constructed a set of stairs and walkways that linked visitors to the top of Chimney Rock. Freeman also built the first walkway from Chimney Rock to Hickory Nut Falls.

Dr. Lucius B. Morse and his brothers purchased Chimney Rock from Freeman in 1902 hoping to capitalize on speculation that a new railroad would be built through Hickory Nut Gorge, increasing tourism to the region.

The railroad through the gorge was never realized, and until completion of the Hickory Nut Gap Road in 1915, travel to the park was extremely difficult. Visitors arrived at the remote park landscape by carriage and on horseback. Governor Locke Craig's "Good Roads Movement" in 1915 dramatically improved access to the Hickory Nut Gorge region and provided the impetus for increased tourism. Morse completed the entrance road in 1916, linking it directly to the completed Hickory Nut Gap Road and opening the park to automobile travel. On July 4, 1916, Morse, erected a United States flag on top of Chimney Rock to inaugurate the park.

During the 1920s and 1930s much of the park's original infrastructure was installed. Lake Lure was built in 1927 by Dr. Morse as a speculative resort and land development enterprise. Morse founded Chimney Rock Mountains, Inc. and a subsidiary, Carolina Mountain Power Company, constructed the lake dam. In 1946, Morse constructed a tunnel and elevator to deliver patrons to the top of Chimney Rock, thereby avoiding the arduous climb of 470 steps. During their 105 years of ownership, the Morse family expanded the park, creating an appealing and unique destination.

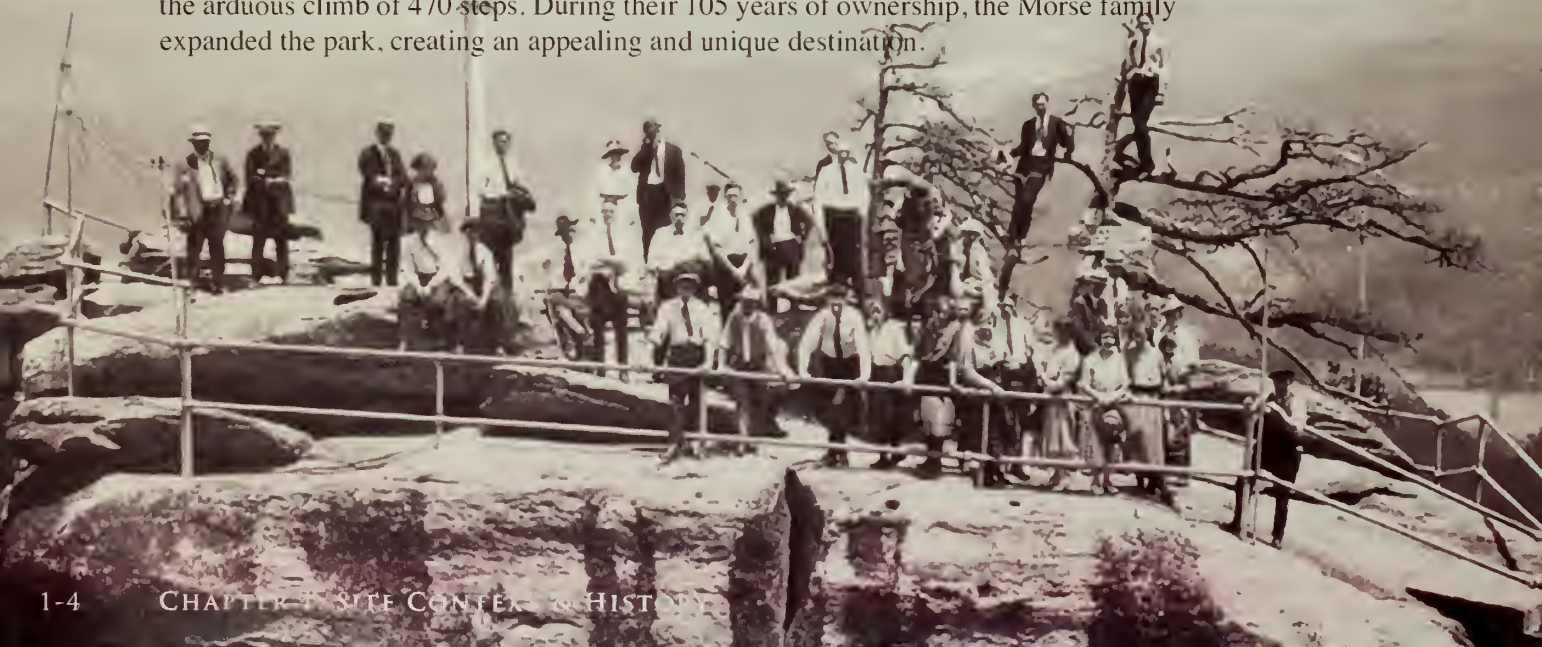


1 Top of Chimney Rock, ca. 1910

2 Opera Box, ca. 1920

3 Park entrance bridge, ca. 1925

4 Top of Chimney Rock, ca. 1918





## RECREATION RESOURCES AND VISITATION

### THE HICKORY NUT GORGE REGION

The tourism industry in the Hickory Nut Gorge region is undergoing a significant transformation. Once based principally on private attractions owned and operated by entrepreneurs and their families, the gorge is shifting away from institutional and corporate ownership and management. With the State of North Carolina's acquisition of land within the Hickory Nut Gorge, the region will continue to evolve as a tourist destination. The developing Chimney Rock State Park will serve as one of the biggest draws of visitation and tourism for the region in the coming years.

The Hickory Nut Gorge region offers both public and private natural-based recreational resource opportunities for visitors. Opportunities include picnicking, bird watching, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, rock climbing, and water based recreation. Buncombe, Rutherford, Polk, and Henderson counties offer small community and municipal parks, as well as hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian opportunities on state and federal lands such as DuPont State Forest, Pisgah National Forest, and several other western North Carolina state parks. Various outfitters and guides offer tours and recreational opportunities within the gorge.

### CHIMNEY ROCK VILLAGE & TOWN OF LAKE LURE

Chimney Rock Village is situated along the historic Hickory Nut Gap Road (U.S. Route 64/74A) and is the location of the existing Chimney Rock State Park entrance. Village merchants have created the Community Development Association (CDA) to promote economic revitalization of the Chimney Rock Village area. The CDA is also broadening the tourist economy through the renovations of public and private places. A special focus has been placed on public access to the village's three-mile portion of the Rocky Broad River, which accommodates public access to the water providing an overall pleasant environment for guests, visitors, and residents.

The Town of Lake Lure is located one mile east of the current entrance to the park. The Town offers lodging, retail, commercial, and restaurant services for residents and visitors. The Town operates a park system consisting of a waterfront greenway, Morse Park, a marina, and a public golf course. The Beach at Lake Lure accommodates swimming and sunbathing.



*View west into Hickory Nut Gorge from Lake Lure*



## FORMER CHIMNEY ROCK PARK

The former Chimney Rock Park has always been the primary attraction for visitors to the Hickory Nut Gorge region. Shortly after it officially opened for business in 1916, more than 14,000 visitors toured the park in 1917 and by 1919, visitation exceeded 35,000. As indicated by Table 1, visitation at Chimney Rock Park has been steady over the years. A record 278,000 visitors came to the park in 1999. Since that time, attendance has declined, in concert with a national decline in tourism coinciding with the tragic events of September 11, 2001 and the 2008-2010 recessionary economy. Nevertheless, the current Chimney Rock State Park remains a popular local, regional and southeastern United States destination. In 2009, the park recorded 210,720 visitors, and in 2010, the number reached 214,728.

At an elevation of 2,280-feet, the geologic feature, Chimney Rock, affords a 75-mile view of the surrounding mountains and Lake Lure. Most of the park's natural features are connected by a network of trails. These trails include the Great Woodland Adventure Trail, the Four Seasons Trail, the Hickory Nut Falls Trail, the Outcroppings Trail, and the Skyline Trail. The Skyline Trail takes visitors from the Chimney Rock to Exclamation Point, the highest publicly accessible point in the park, at an elevation of 2,480 feet.

Other visitor opportunities within the park include picnicking, environmental education, and concessions such as food and retail.

FIGURE 1.4: CHIMNEY ROCK ATTENDANCE CHART 1990-2010

Year	Attendance
1990	134,133
1991	160,727
1992	168,522
1993	210,814
1994	216,330
1995	230,911
1996	232,923
1997	248,049
1998	n/a
1999	278,802
2000	277,961
2001	269,191
2002	275,516
2003	259,966
2004	244,291
2005	215,470
2006	215,764
2007	241,585
2008	212,115
2009	210,720
2010	214,728





## INTERPRETIVE THEMES

The 1987 State Parks Act establishes that park lands are to be used by the people of the state and their visitors in order to promote understanding of and pride in the natural heritage of this state. Park interpretation and environmental education are primary ways in which the Division of Parks and Recreation achieves this purpose.

Interpretive themes are summary statements about the ideas, concepts, and stories that are central to the nature and significance of the park. Primary themes provide the foundation from which programs and media are developed. Most major interpretive efforts should relate to one or more of the primary themes. Effective interpretation results when visitors are able to connect these concepts with the park's resources, creating personal meaning from the experience. Interpretive themes for Chimney Rock State Park are outlined on the following page.



*Views of Rumbling Bald Mountain from Eagle Rock, June 2009*

### LIVING ON THE EDGE

The Rocky Broad River cuts through the mountainous terrain to create the eight-mile long gorge, ending in the man-made Lake Lure. This has created distinct geological features and diverse natural community types including Low Elevation Rocky Summit and Low Elevation Granitic Dome. These areas are often too steep or rocky to support a closed forest canopy and many rare plant and animal species have adapted to such harsh environmental conditions. The area's highest peaks and steep slopes host bird species relatively uncommon to the region. Peregrine falcons and ravens prefer these rocky exposed cliffs to lay their eggs. Rocky outcrops facing north also support unique plant species. Life on these outcrops and cliff faces has teetered on the edge for many of these rare species, but with the continued protection of these incredible places, these species can survive.

### GEOLOGIC FORCES BEHIND THE STUNNING SCENERY OF HICKORY NUT GORGE

The magnificent cliffs at Chimney Rock State Park tell the story of nearly 500 million years of geologic forces. These unhurried forces include ancient volcanic activity, heat and pressure miles beneath the earth's surface, plate tectonics and erosion. The area is still seismically active with a magnitude 3.1 earthquake occurring eight miles south of Lake Lure in 2007, and historical earthquake reports in the late 1800s giving Rumbling Bald its name.



*Rocky exposed cliffs with the Rocky Broad River below.*



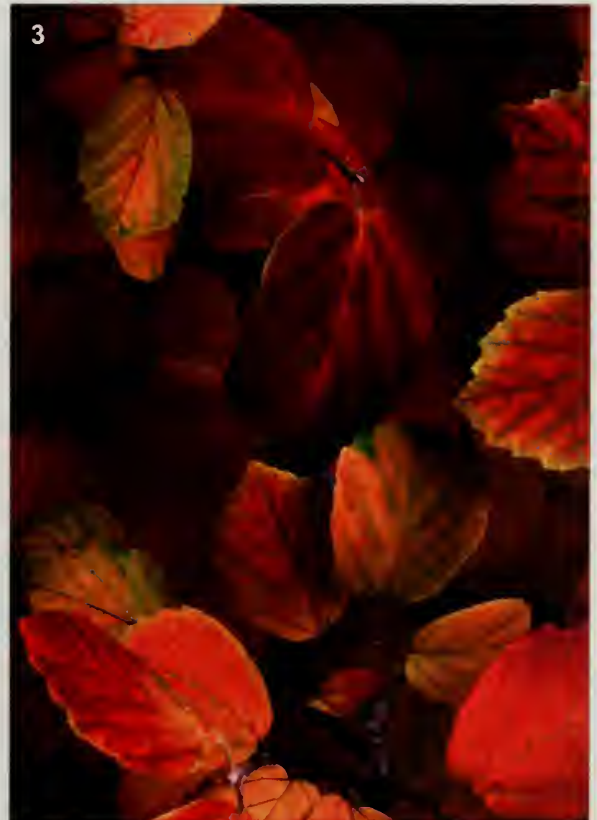


On either side of the river, steep exposed cliffs underscore vegetated ridge tops, demonstrating two distinctly different types of bedrock. The combination of forces of expanding ice between cracks in the cliffs and gravity cause large pieces of cliff to break off. These ongoing rockslides, natural erosive forces and other geological activity have resulted in remarkable landforms including Chimney Rock and the dramatic cliff faces that frame the gorge.

1 Peregrine Falcons: photo by Mike Baird [flickr.bairdphotos.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/bairdphotos/)

2 White Rattlesnake Root

3 Large Witch Alder





## PARTNERSHIPS FOR PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

The dramatic beauty of Hickory Nut Gorge has attracted visitors to the area since the late 1800s. In 1916, the opening of the privately-owned Chimney Rock Park made the area an even more popular travel destination. Development in the gorge and on lands surrounding Lake Lure reflects the area's popularity. Still, perhaps the greatest significance of Chimney Rock State Park remains its outstanding biological diversity, including numerous species of rare plants and animals. Conservation organizations, private landowners and government agencies worked collaboratively to preserve the lands that collectively became a state park in 2005. Surrounding communities and conservation organizations continue to work collaboratively to find a balance between the economic benefits of tourism and the need to protect the unique resources of Hickory Nut Gorge.



*Visitors atop Chimney Rock, June 2009*

## CULTURAL CONTEXT

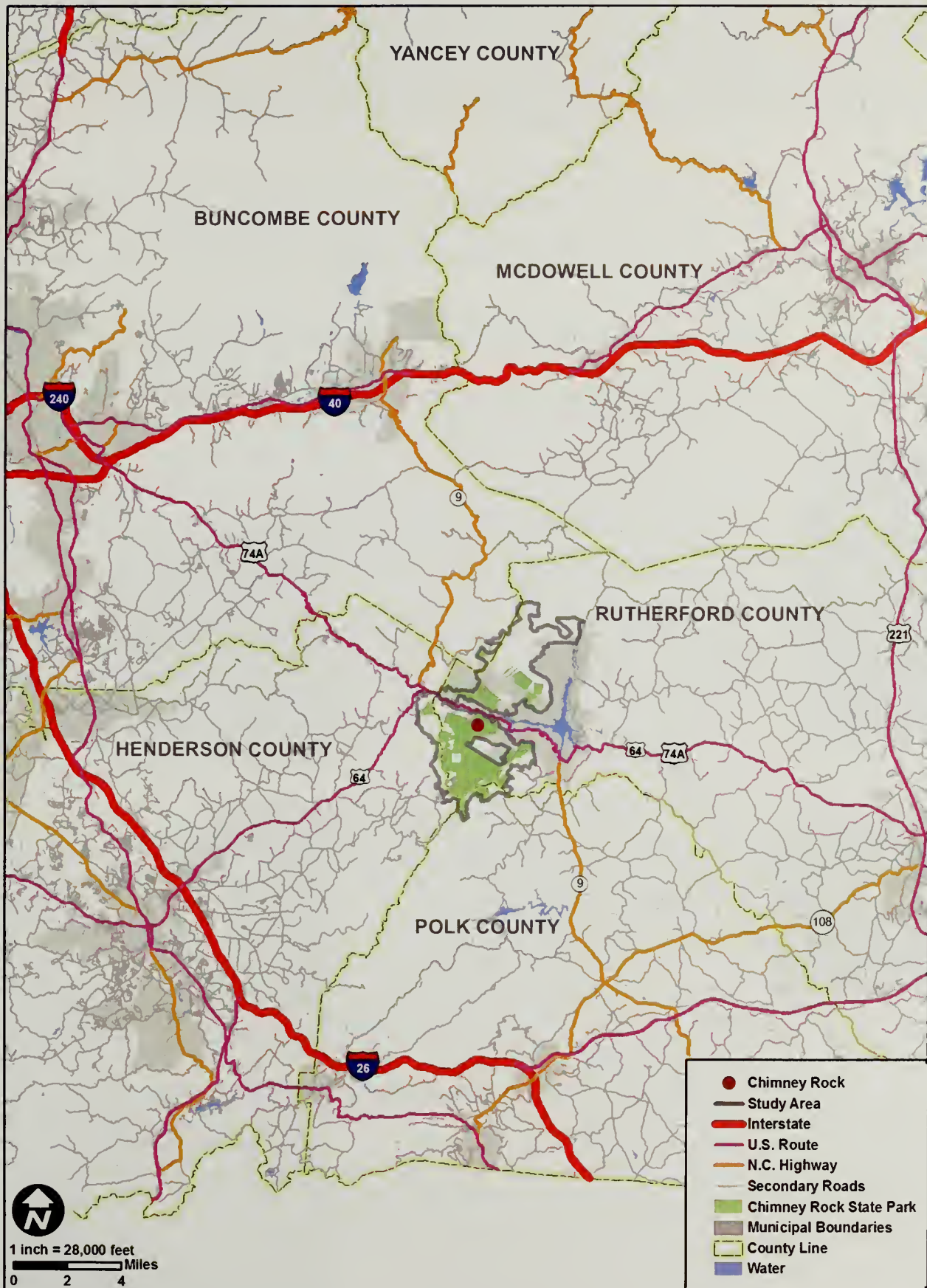
### CIRCULATION/ACCESSING THE PARK

Access to Chimney Rock State Park's main entrance is located off U.S. Route 64/74A, 40 miles south of Interstate 40 from U.S. Route 221, and 17 miles east of Interstate 240 from Asheville as shown on Figure 1.5. Secondary roads lead north on N.C. Highway 9 from Montreat and N.C. Highway 64 from Hendersonville to the park entrance off U.S. Route 64/74A.

Vehicular access is limited in parts of the park study area. Sugarloaf Mountain Road and World's Edge Road terminate in southern parts of the study area but do not penetrate northern portions of park-owned property. Much of the surrounding study area is currently inaccessible by vehicle.

In the northern areas of the park near Rumbling Bald, visitors take Boys Camp Road to the climbing day use area. Boys Camp Road is not a through-road and terminates about one half-mile past the climbing day use area, limiting further access. There are two other roadways in the northern study area on the outskirts of the park: Shumont Road and Buffalo Creek Road. Shumont Road is a winding mountain road accessible from N.C. Highway 9. This roadway also ends and splits into two dirt roads, where several privately-owned properties continue before entering the park boundary. Where the paved roadway ends, no public access is currently permitted. Buffalo Creek Road is only accessible by driving around Lake Lure. Following U.S. Route 64/74A east, Buffalo Shoals Road becomes Buffalo Creek Road. Smaller private roadways exist off Buffalo Creek Road leading into residential areas and neighborhoods.

FIGURE 1.5: STUDY AREA CIRCULATION





## REGIONAL PLANNING AND LAND USE

The study area for Chimney Rock State Park lies within four counties: Rutherford, Henderson, Polk, and Buncombe (see Figure 1.3, page 1-3 for the study area). Each of these counties have separate comprehensive plans, zoning classifications and land use categories.

### RUTHERFORD COUNTY

In Rutherford County, two populated areas within the study area are the Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure. Both of these areas are classified by the county as developed or limited transition. Limited transition is defined as providing for limited development, primarily residential. The remaining lands are classified as either rural or are unclassified. The study area in Rutherford County was not zoned at the time this document was prepared.

Several comprehensive land use plans have been developed in the counties that comprise the study area. Based on the *Rutherford County Land Use Plan*, it is envisioned that Rutherford County will focus more on recreation by assisting local municipalities to complement existing park facilities and to meet future needs.

*The Rutherford County Comprehensive Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan* is based upon a review of the entire county, an analysis of existing arts, parks and recreation facilities, citizens surveys, identification of needs and limitations, visions for all aspects of arts, parks and recreation, and recommendations to fulfill these visions. This plan is designed to be implemented over a number of years, and should be serviceable through the year 2015.

*The Lake Lure Comprehensive Plan* refers to Lake Lure as the “focal point of the community, (the town center).” The plan makes references to the existing buildings, and to the feasibility of infill development that would include a mixture of complementary uses, particularly recreation-oriented retail. Other opportunities for reuse are suggested, such as the hotel and arcade building by providing a context for the creation of a compact, vibrant center of activity.

### BUNCOMBE COUNTY

Study areas within Buncombe County did not have associated land use classifications at the time this document was prepared. The study area in Buncombe County has a zoning classification of “open use.”

### POLK COUNTY

Polk County study areas did not have associated land use classifications at the time this document was prepared. The study area within the county is not zoned. In 2009, Polk County passed the *Mountainside and Ridgeline Protection Ordinance* for unzoned areas at elevations of 1,650 feet or greater. This ordinance controls development in the western portion of the county by protecting the natural conditions and respecting existing topography, and securing the public health, safety, and general welfare within these areas.

### HENDERSON COUNTY

Henderson County has a comprehensive land use classification system. Lands within the study area are broadly classified as residential, vacant, agricultural, and commercial with each of these categories broken out further. For zoning purposes, the majority of the study area in Henderson County is zoned as R3 (intended for low density residential) and Open Use (a district in which almost all uses are allowed, but some are regulated so as to ensure that neighborhood impact is mitigated).

RUTHERFORD COUNTY

LAND USE PLAN

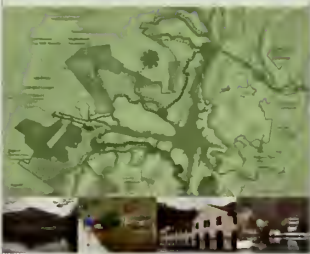


REVISED - 2001

Comprehensive  
Arts, Parks and Recreation Plan  
2003/2006



Lake Lure  
2007/2008 Comprehensive Plan



June 2007



# 2 EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

## BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES INVENTORY

The following provides a general description of the infrastructure, services, utilities and roadway network within Chimney Rock State Park. Figures 2.1 and 2.2 show inventoried existing park facilities.

Information contained in this inventory was developed from an on-site assessment of park facilities in May 2009. The assessment included a limited visual inspection of buildings and structures within the park. Additional resources utilized for this inventory include, but are not limited to, the N.C. Department of Administration “Assessment of Chimney Rock Park Facilities” (from the Facilities Conditions Assessment Program) dated March 26, 2007; and the Phase I Environmental Site Assessment of the Chimney Rock Park, prepared for the N.C. Department of Administration dated Feb. 26, 2007.



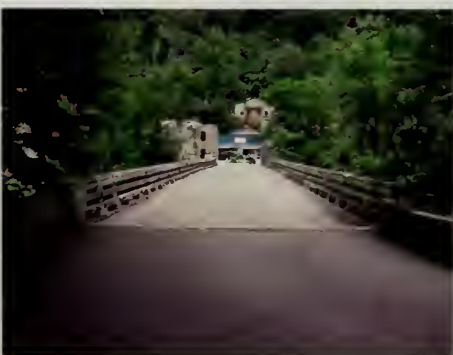
### OLD ROCK CAFÉ (ca. 1970s, 2,346 SF)

Located along U.S. Route 64/74A to the west of the main park entry. Two story structure with block masonry construction. Painted vertical siding on sides and rear of the building and stone veneer along the front. Asphalt shingle roofing. Sloped canopy along the front sidewalk with painted plywood ceiling and fascia. Timber deck with canvas canopy provides outside dining overlooking the Rocky Broad River.



### PARK ENTRANCE (ca. 1920s)

Two stone masonry towers flanking the bridge access across the Rocky Broad River. The west tower was utilized at one time as a ticket sales office and includes a second floor area. There is a rest-room adjacent to the main entry to the east. The building is timber frame construction with stained wood siding and shingle roofing.



### ENTRY BRIDGE (est. dates vary)

Spans the Rocky Broad River at park entrance. 218 feet long and 21 feet, three inches wide. Timber decking system with a two-inch plank wearing surface and 3/4-inch timber deck supported on steel beams with concrete substructure. Timber railing completes the bridge superstructure. Bridge improvements were made in early 2011.

FIGURE 2.1: CHIMNEY ROCK EXISTING PARK FACILITIES

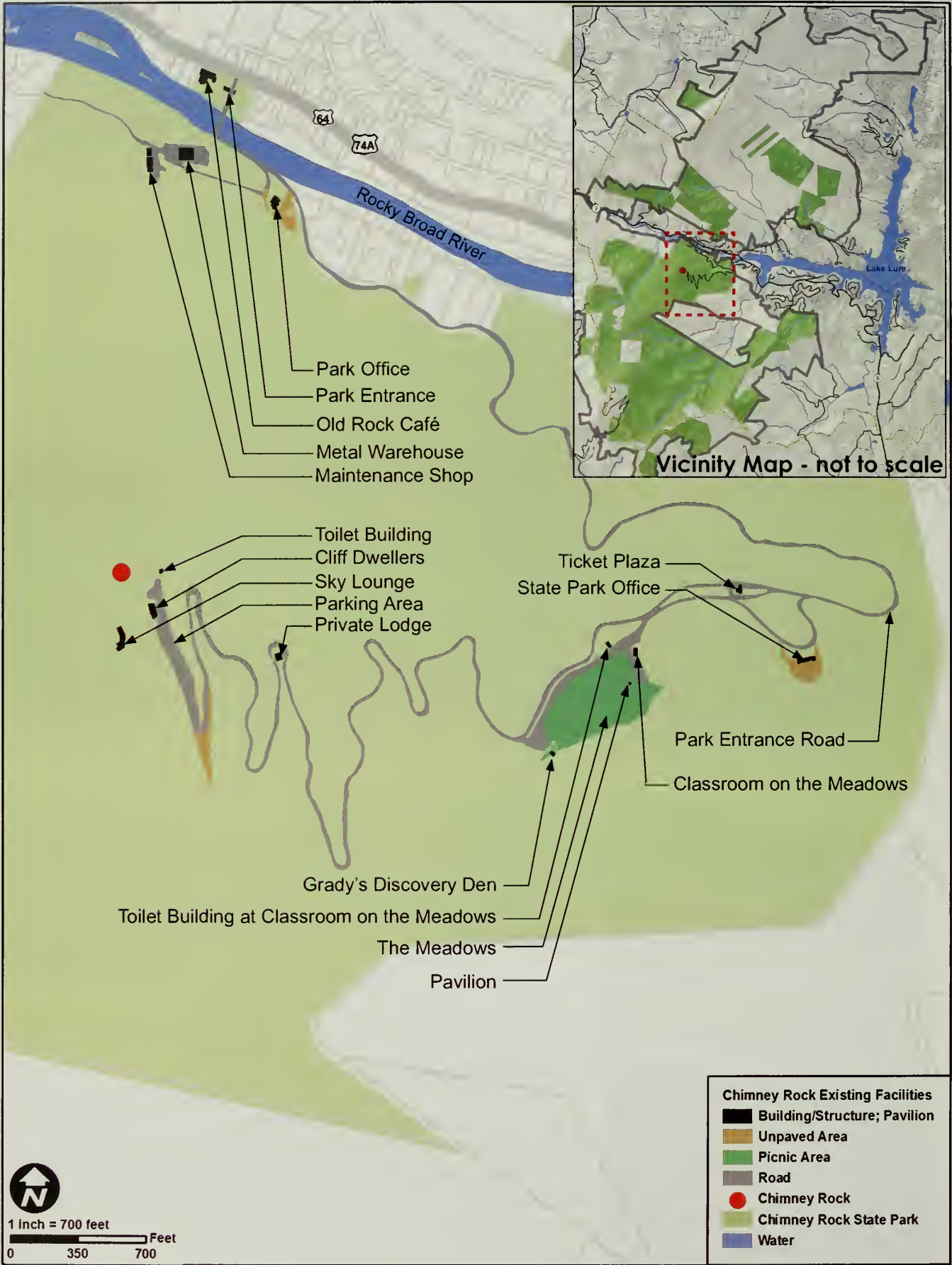




FIGURE 2.2: RUMBLING BALD EXISTING PARK FACILITIES





#### **METAL WAREHOUSE** (ca. 2005, 3,618 SF)

Pole barn structure consisting of heavy timber roof trusses supported on laminated timber posts that are embedded in the ground. Corrugated metal roofing and siding at exterior envelope. Concrete slab on grade. There is a truck-height covered dock at one end of the building with roll-up dock door.



#### **MAINTENANCE SHOP** (est. dates vary, 2,450 SF)

Includes office building with attached sheds to the south. Office is a masonry block structure with a hipped roof and two service bays with a small office area on crawl space at the north end of the building. Both shed additions include metal roofing. Center-shed portion is timber frame hipped construction. Southern shed addition is a mono-sloped timber frame structure with metal roofing.



#### **PARK OFFICE** (ca.1920s, 1,773 SF)

Converted house located just south of the Rocky Broad River along the entry drive. Timber frame construction with a brick veneer foundation on concrete footings. Exterior is painted cedar lap siding. Asphalt shingle roofing.



#### **STATE PARK OFFICE AND ATTACHED MAINTENANCE SHED** (ca. 2003, 2,612 SF)

The maintenance shop with attached shed contains 2,612 SF of space. Timber frame construction with painted cedar siding on block masonry foundation. Office area has a concrete slab on grade and the shed area is gravel. The office portion of the building contains a mezzanine.



#### **TICKET PLAZA** (ca. 1996, 529 SF)

Contains 529 SF of heated area with an attached canopy area of 457 SF. Includes small ticket office with visitor lobby, two ticket windows within building, and restroom for staff. The canopy area includes two drive lanes with separate enclosed ticket booth between lanes.





### **CLASSROOM ON THE MEADOWS (ca. 1992, 1,180 SF)**

Includes a display room with storage areas. There has been an addition at the rear (east) side of the building that is supported on masonry block foundation. Asphalt shingle roofing.



### **TOILET BUILDING AT CLASSROOM ON THE MEADOWS (ca. 1981, 491 SF)**

Block masonry construction with timber frame roof structure and asphalt shingle roofing. Exterior is stone veneer with painted cedar siding at the gable ends and painted plywood soffits at overhangs. Interior finish is a mural painted on stucco and drywall painted ceiling.



### **PAVILION (ca. 1982, 1,800 SF)**

Open sided structure located south of the Classroom on the Meadows. Glu-lam structural frame with timber decking and support post. The floor is slab on grade with asphalt shingle roofing and aluminum gutters along the sides.



### **GRADY'S DISCOVERY DEN (ca. 1998, 366 SF)**

Modular structure with an additional 384 SF of elevated decking along the east and north sides of the building. Supported on masonry block foundation and includes tie-down straps for horizontal wind load resistance. The building exterior is clad with stained split log siding and the interior is also sealed wood. Standing seam metal roofing.



### **PRIVATE LODGE (ca. 1916, 1,833 SF)**

Timber frame construction on crawl space with masonry foundation. Building exterior consists of painted wood lapboard siding and roofing is asphalt shingles. Windows are insulated glass in aluminum frames and the main entry is a sliding glass door. Electric service is located in a shed attachment on the east side of the building.



#### **WELL HOUSE (ca. 1980, 300 SF)**

Block masonry construction with timber truss roof structure and asphalt shingle roofing. The exterior is un-painted masonry with plywood sheathing at the gable ends of the building. Entry is via a hollow metal door and the floor is slab on grade.



#### **RETAINING WALL AT CLIFF DWELLERS PARKING LOT (est. dates vary)**

Extends along the length of the parking lot at Cliff Dwellers. Mortared stone, varies in height along the reach of the wall. Wall is capped with a sidewalk, and chain link fencing extends most of the way to Cliff Dwellers.



#### **CLIFF DWELLERS GIFT SHOP (ca. 2003, 2,652 SF)**

Building is two stories in height with asphalt shingle roofing and painted cement board siding. Front of the building has storefront glass style windows with insulated plates and anodized aluminum frames.



#### **TOILET BUILDING AT CLIFF DWELLERS (ca. 2003, 429 SF)**

Block masonry construction with timber frame roof structure and asphalt shingle roofing. Exterior is stone veneer with painted cedar siding at the gable ends and painted plywood soffits at overhangs.



#### **TUNNEL, ELEVATOR AND SHAFT (ca. 1940's, 2,200 SF)**

The tunnel and elevator shaft are cut from solid rock with the tunnel extending 258 feet horizontally to a vertical shaft housing the elevator. The tunnel extends from the Cliff Dwellers parking lot into the mountain side to the base of the elevator shaft. Elevator car provides access from the public parking area to the Sky Lounge, a vertical movement of 198 feet. The elevator shaft includes a metal stairway for emergency access. Improvements scheduled to begin in 2011.





### SKY LOUNGE (ca. 1987, 3,794 SF)

Situated 26 stories above Cliff Dwellers. Access is either via elevator or trail network. Construction is heavy timber frame and natural lighting has been provided to the building via second story windows along the rear wall. Siding is painted wood. Asphalt shingle roofing. The front of the building overhangs the mortared stone foundation with a floor structure of concrete slab. Improvements scheduled to begin in 2011.



### PARK BOARDWALKS AND STAIR STRUCTURES

(est. dates vary)

There are numerous treated timber boardwalks and stair structures constructed of wood and metal throughout the park.

## EXISTING TRAILS INVENTORY

Public trails at Chimney Rock State Park are located primarily near Chimney Rock. Trail surfacing varies from natural tread to granite fines and boardwalk. Many trails are looped and incorporate educational signage elements. Trail widths range from 18 inches to 12 feet. Figure 2.3 shows existing trails at Chimney Rock State Park. Existing trails at Chimney Rock State Park include:



### GREAT WOODLAND ADVENTURE TRAIL

(0.6 mile loop, from Grady's Discovery Den)

Trail is three to four feet wide, surfacing materials include bare earth, granite fines, treated timber boardwalk, and treated timber bridges. Educational signage, art and sculpture are located strategically along the trail. Trail entrance is located behind Grady's Discovery Den. Approximately 20 to 30-minute non-strenuous hike.



### FOUR SEASONS TRAIL (0.6 mile, from the Meadows to Hickory Nut Falls Trail)

Natural tread with timber and rock steps, treated timber boardwalk and stair structures. Trail is three to four feet wide. Approximately 30 to 45-minute strenuous hike with 400-foot gain in elevation.



**HICKORY NUT FALLS TRAIL** (0.75 mile from the Park Entrance Road to base of Hickory Nut Falls)

Trail varies in width from 10 to 12 feet with several uphill sections. Surfacing ranges from granite fines to natural tread and exposed rock. Treated timber boardwalk features, a stair structure and timber retaining walls are in several locations. Approximately 30-minute moderate hike.



**OUTCROPPINGS TRAIL** (0.25 miles, from the Cliff Dwellers Parking Lot to top of Chimney Rock)

Stair structures and treated timber boardwalk. Trail width varies from four to eight feet. Viewing platforms are treated timber. The Outcroppings trail provides access to Vista Rock, the Grotto, the Subway, Pulpit Rock, and Moonshiner's Cave. Approximately 20 to 30-minute strenuous hike.



**PULPIT ROCK, SUBWAY AND GROTTO TRAIL** (0.10 mile loop from Outcroppings Trail)

Native rock, timber boardwalk. Trail is a loop off of the Outcroppings Trail, links together Pulpit Rock, Subway and Grotto. The trail has been closed during the timeframe of this master plan due to substandard tread conditions.

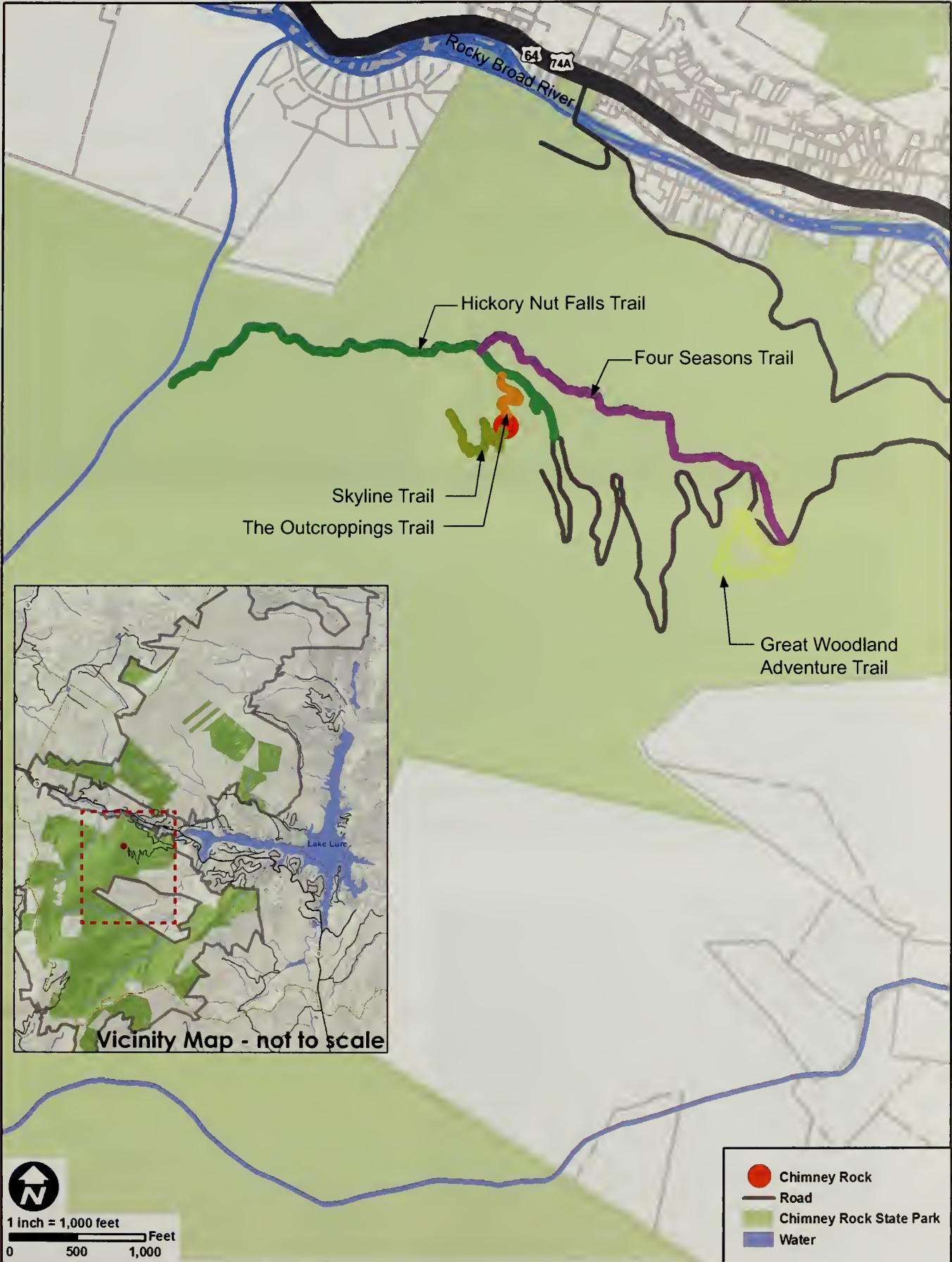


**SKYLINE TRAIL** (0.35 mile from top of Chimney Rock to Exclamation Point)

Masonry, timber edging, timber boardwalk, natural tread, and gravel surfacing. Trail connects to the Opera Box, Devil's Head, and Exclamation Point. Approximately 20 to 30-minute moderate to strenuous hike.



FIGURE 2.3: STUDY AREA EXISTING TRAILS



## ROADS AND UTILITIES INVENTORY

### EXISTING ROADS

The park is served by a single, paved, three-mile-long entrance road off of U.S. Route 64/74A with a bridge across the Rocky Broad River. Traffic on the entrance road is two-way with the exception of a short section at the ticket office. Roadway width varies from 16 to 20 feet with varying shoulder width. The roadway ascends from the entrance to Cliff Dwellers on moderate to steep grades, utilizing a number of switchbacks.



*Park entrance road*



*Pedestrian crosswalk along entrance road*



*Overflow parking at The Meadows*



*Parking at Cliff Dwellers*

### EXISTING PARKING AREAS

Main public parking areas are located at Cliff Dwellers and the Meadows. A large gravel area at the Meadows can support up to 200 cars. Parking at Cliff Dwellers includes a paved parking area with 168 marked standard automobile spaces and four ADA accessible spaces. An additional gravel and grass parking area adjacent to the paved area serves as overflow and bus/RV parking.

Parking at the ticket plaza is accommodated by a small paved area with three marked standard spaces, one ADA accessible space, and RV parking adjacent to the entrance road. Parking for other facilities is provided by small gravel or grassed areas adjacent to these facilities.





*Public parking at the Rumbling Bald*

### **RUMBLING BALD CLIMBING ACCESS EXISTING PARKING AREAS**

Public parking for the Rumbling Bald Climbing Access area is located off Boys Camp Road in the northeastern portion of the study area. A paved roadway extends from Boys Camp Road to a gravel parking area that can support up to 33 vehicles. The parking area is gated and is open daily from 8:00 a.m. until sunset.

### **EXISTING SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS**

The Town of Lake Lure provides sanitary service to the Old Rock Café. All other sanitary service for the park facilities is provided by septic/drain field systems.

Sanitary service for Cliff Dwellers, the toilet building at Cliff Dwellers, and the Sky Lounge is provided by a single system consisting of two 1,500-gallon underground septic tanks beneath the paved parking area and a drain field of unknown dimensions located beneath the current gravel portion of the parking area. Sanitary waste from Cliff Dwellers gravity-flows to the septic tanks by underground PVC pipe. Sanitary waste from the Sky Lounge gravity flows to the septic tanks in an above-ground PVC pipe. Sanitary waste from the toilet building at Cliff Dwellers is temporarily stored in a holding tank behind the toilet building and pumped by way of a grinder pump to the septic tanks detailed above.

Sanitary service for the toilet building at Classroom on the Meadows, Ticket Plaza, State Park Office, Park Office, and the Metal Warehouse and Maintenance Shop are provided by three different septic tank/drain field systems adjacent to these facilities.

### **EXISTING WATER SYSTEMS**

Historically, the park provided water to the Town of Lake Lure and the Chimney Rock Village as well as the park facilities from surface springs. Supply was provided by way of surface piping which is still quite evident throughout the park property. The use of surface springs and service to communities outside the park was discontinued within the last two decades. Water supply for the park is currently provided by a number of wells located throughout the park property primarily along the entrance road.

The Park Office is served by a well of unknown depth and capacity located adjacent to the building (dug in the early 1980s).

The Metal Warehouse and Maintenance Shop are served by a well of unknown specifications located between the old gatehouse and the Rocky Broad River. Service from this well is provided to the warehouse and maintenance buildings by a ¾-inch polyethylene pipe run under the bridge deck across the river.

The Old Rock Café is served by Chimney Rock Village water service. This is the only facility within the park that is not served by a well.



*Overhead electrical and telecommunications service*

The State Park Office is served by a well of unknown specifications located within the adjacent utility shed.

The Grady's Discovery Den is served by a six inch, 1,200-foot-deep well with a capacity of six gallons per minute (gpm). This well is also connected to the water system for the upper park area described below but does not contribute to the water supply for this system.

The remainder of the park facilities (Sky Lounge, Cliff Dwellers, toilet building at Cliff Dwellers, toilet building at Classroom on the Meadows, Private Lodge, Classroom on the Meadows, and ticket plaza) are served by a well/reservoir system connected to a network of above-ground piping. The primary well is located adjacent to the entrance drive between Grady's Discovery Den and the Private Lodge. The well is six inches

in diameter, 200 feet deep, dug in 2006 with a capacity of 35 gpm. The well pump is controlled by a float switch located in the nearby 7,500-gallon pump house reservoir. This reservoir provides water by gravity head pressure to the Meadows including Classroom on the Meadows, the toilet building at Classroom on the Meadows, and the Ticket Plaza. Chemical disinfectant is added to the pump house reservoir daily. The system is tested periodically for bacteriological contamination and nitrates.

## EXISTING ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

Duke Power provides electrical service for the park facilities. Service to the Old Rock Café, Park Office, Metal Warehouse and Maintenance Shop are provided by a service line originating in Chimney Rock Village.

Electrical service for all other park facilities is provided by an aerial three-phase service line. This above-ground service terminates at Cliff Dwellers. Service to individual facilities is provided by either above or below-ground services. Service to the Sky Lounge, elevator and lighting areas around the primary attraction is provided by way of a three-phase line, which travels up the elevator shaft.

## EXISTING TELECOMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS

Telecommunication service for park facilities is provided on the same above-ground utility lines that provide electrical service.

## EXISTING STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Stormwater drainage systems throughout the park generally focus on stormwater disposal and conveyance. There are no stormwater treatment or storage facilities within the park. Conveyance of stormwater under roadways and parking lots consists of a combination of precast concrete culverts and corrugated metal piping.





# 3 NATURAL RESOURCES

## INTRODUCTION

Chimney Rock State Park is located on the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the southern Appalachian Mountain range. These mountains are some of the oldest on earth, escaping glaciation during the last ice age and harboring animal and plant life for millions of years – longer than any other region in the United States. The Hickory Nut Gorge region features a subtropical climate and is the second wettest in the United States. The topography is diverse with elevations ranging from the hundreds of feet to 6,684 feet at Mount Mitchell, the highest point in the eastern United States. Due to these topographic and climatic factors, the southern Appalachians host a number of different natural communities and boast some of the greatest biodiversity in the world.

Chimney Rock State Park is one example of the diversity of the southern Appalachians. The park is a tremendous natural resource, containing high quality, intact, and unique natural communities, rare species of plants and animals, rock outcrops, steep slopes, balds, and waterfalls.

Figure 3.1 shows aerial photography of Chimney Rock State Park and the surrounding study area. This image is comprised of orthophotography data from Polk (2003), Henderson (2007), Rutherford (2005), and Buncombe (2006) counties and provides a glimpse of existing development and the terrain of the park and surrounding study area.

## TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION

### TOPOGRAPHY

Figure 3.2 features 20-foot topographic contours for Chimney Rock State Park and the surrounding study area. The map is comprised of 2007 Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) data provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation for Henderson, Rutherford, Buncombe, and Polk counties. The contours show the dramatic landscape, ranging from steep mountains to deep river valleys in the park and surrounding region. The steep protruding cliffs of Chimney Rock, Rumbling Bald and other mountains are indicated by the tight, almost overlapping contour lines.

### ELEVATION

Figure 3.3 illustrates the elevation ranges within the park boundaries and surrounding study area. The elevation within the study area ranges from approximately 989 feet near Lake Lure to 3,966 feet atop Sugarloaf Mountain. The second highest point in the study area is Shumont Mountain at 3,842 feet. These substantial changes in elevation represent design challenges for buildings, trails, and other facilities. The data for this map is from the 2007 LIDAR data.



FIGURE 3.1: STUDY AREA AERIAL IMAGERY

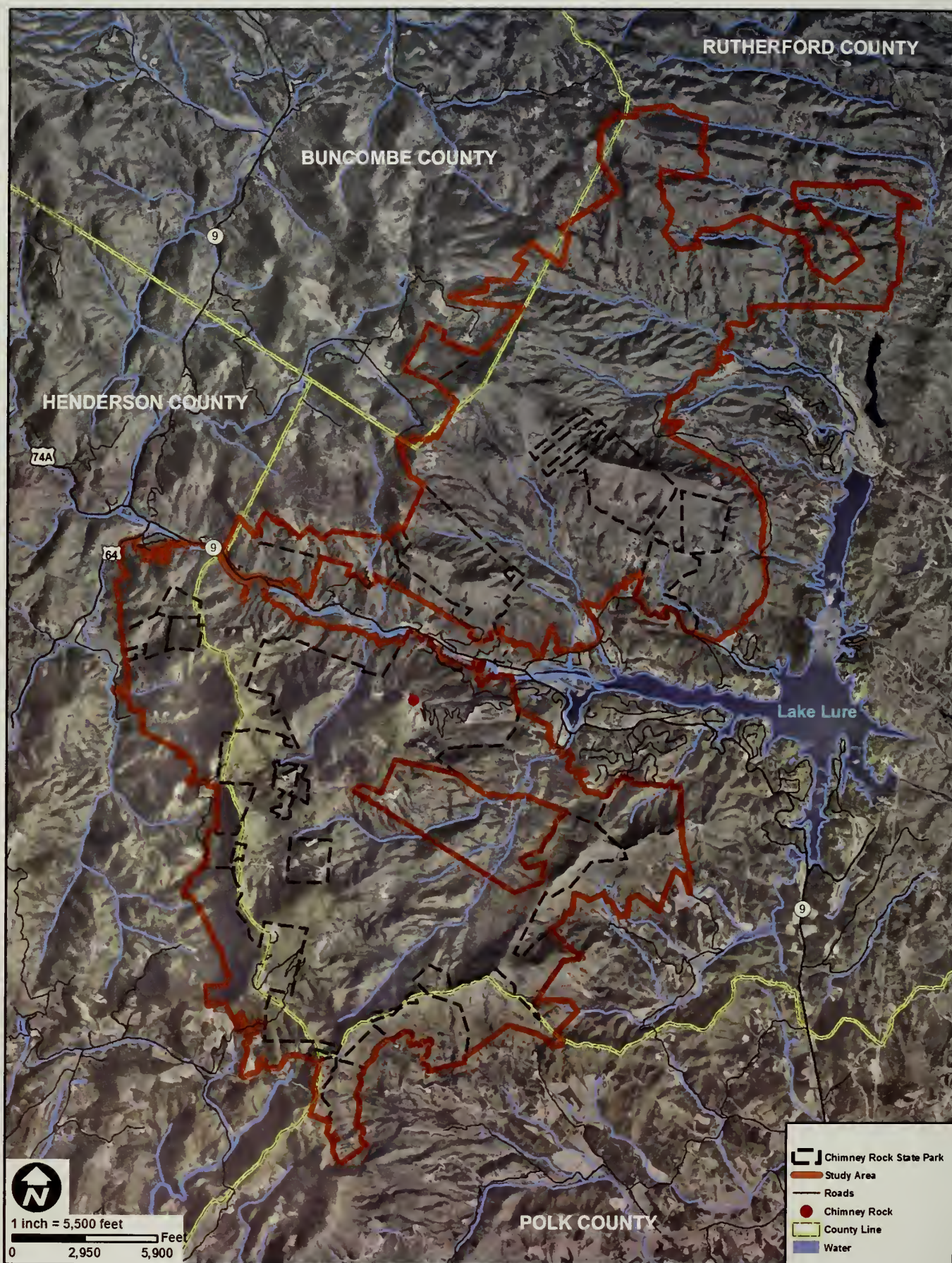




FIGURE 3.2: STUDY AREA TOPOGRAPHY

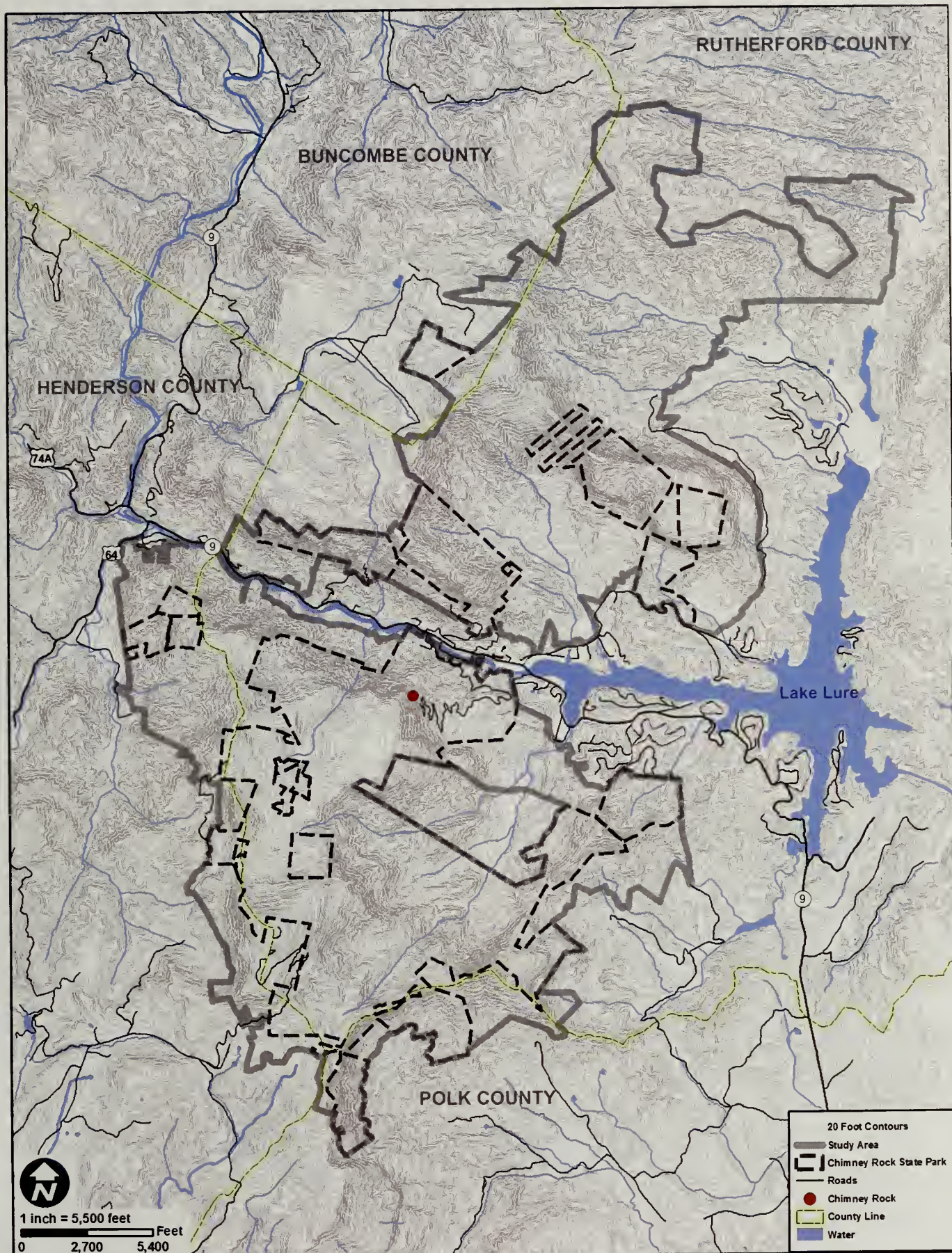
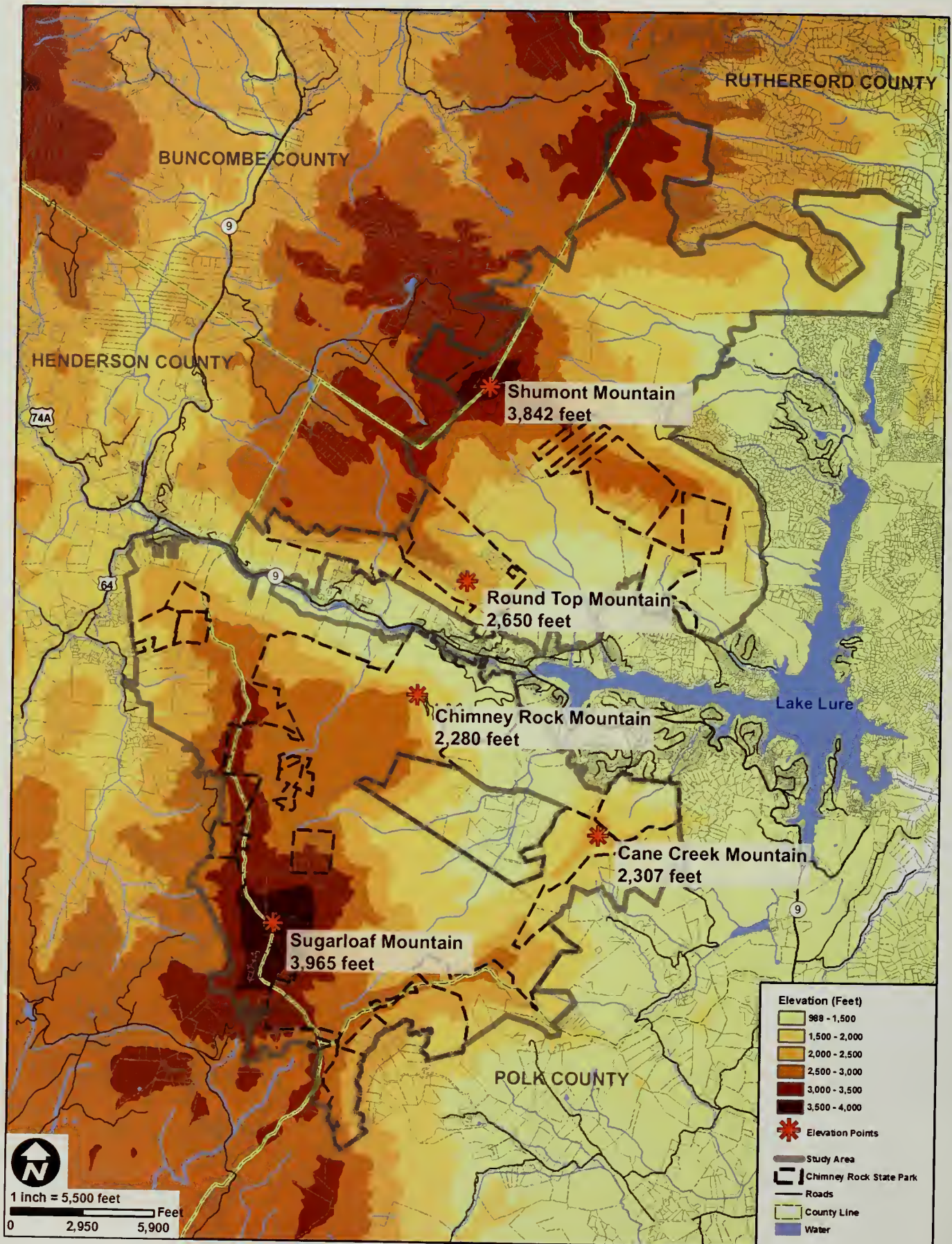




FIGURE 3.3: STUDY AREA ELEVATION







## SLOPE AND ASPECT

### SLOPE

Figure 3.4 displays slopes in percentages utilizing 2007 LIDAR data. This data is not survey quality; therefore, detailed topographic surveys should be conducted during the design development phase for any proposed construction project within park boundaries.

Steep cliffs, overhanging rocks, and tall waterfalls have helped define the Hickory Nut Gorge region. These topographic features dominate the landscape in and around the park.

The two shades of green on the map identify slopes less than 18 percent where development may potentially occur. As indicated by the map, there are very limited areas where this condition can be met. The majority of steep slopes (20 percent or greater) comprise 87 percent of the park and surrounding study area. The maximum conditions for slope with various development-related activities are as follows:

- 0-10%** Easily buildable and pedestrian accessible; ideal for roads and trails.
- 11-18%** Maximum buildable slopes for roads
- 19-30%** Maximum buildable slopes; septic capable
- 31-65%** Steepest provisionally for on-site sewer
- >65%** Unbuildable

### ASPECT

Figure 3.5 illustrates aspect in the park and study area. Aspect is the direction that land faces from north (0°) going clockwise towards east (90°) and so forth back to north (360°), and in turn has an effect on micro communities. Generally, south-facing slopes receive more sunlight, have drier soils and have higher temperature microclimates. North-facing slopes receive more shade and are typically more moist. Species that thrive in moist conditions, such as ferns and rhododendron are typically found on north-facing slopes. Typically, west-facing slopes have higher temperatures than east-facing slopes due to the direct afternoon sun exposure. South-facing slopes are ideal when planning buildings and public use areas utilizing energy-efficient techniques and solar energy harvesting. The map represents south-facing aspects in yellow and pink and north-facing aspects in blue. As indicated by the map, most of the existing facilities at Chimney Rock State Park are located on north-facing slopes.



*View into the Hickory Nut Gorge valley from the Opera Box*



FIGURE 3.4: STUDY AREA SLOPE

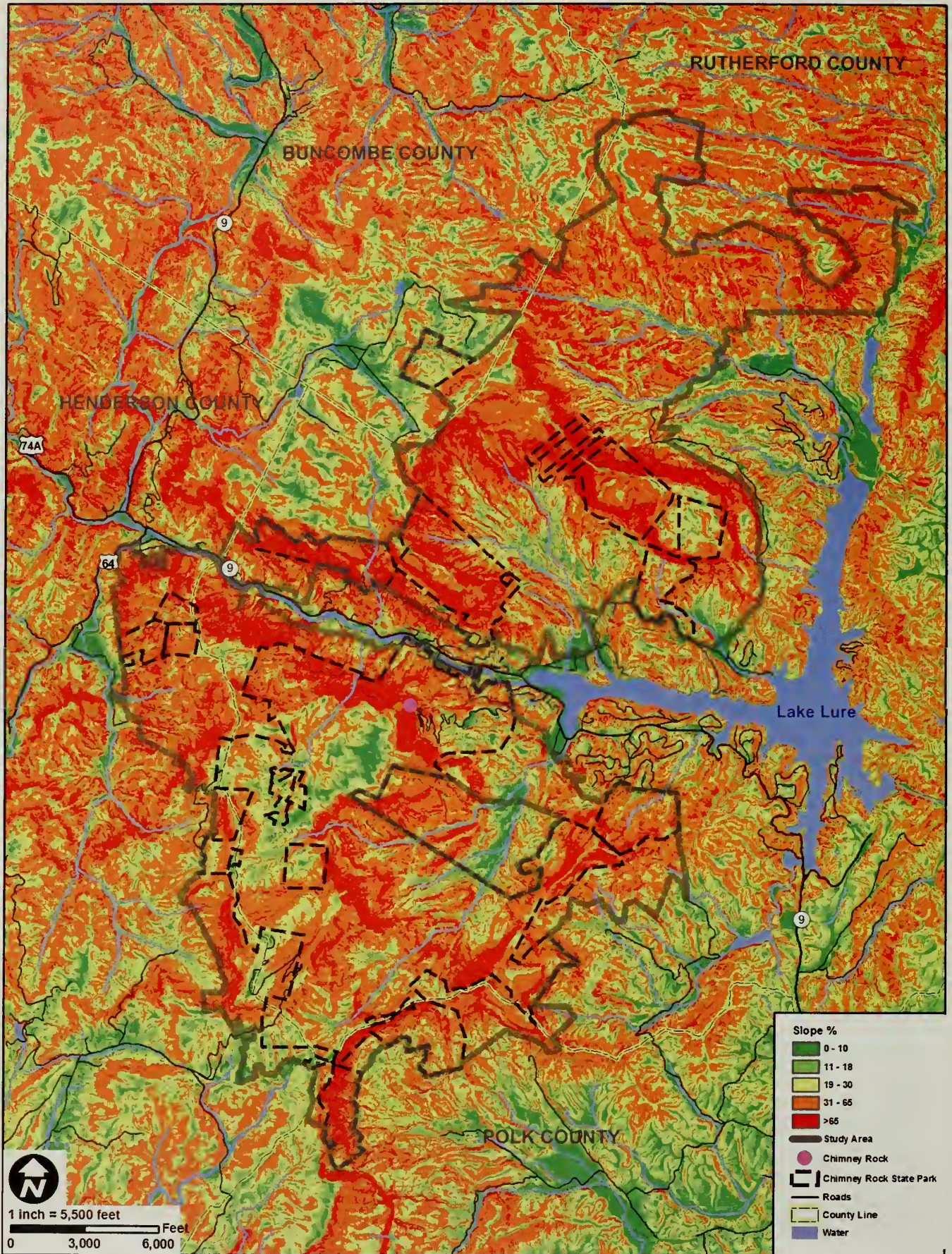
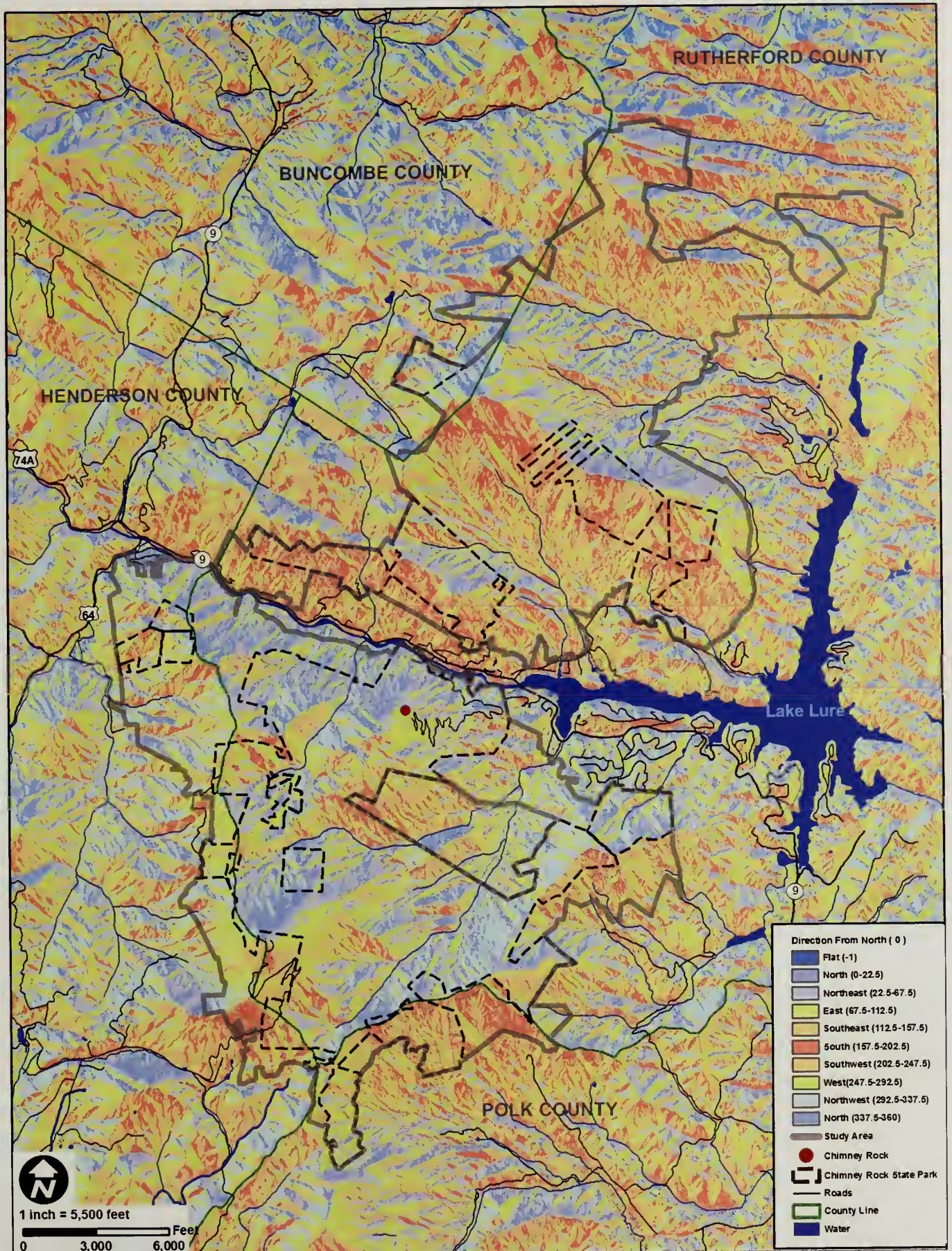






FIGURE 3.5: STUDY AREA ASPECT







## CLIMATE

The southern Appalachian Mountains feature a subtropical wet climate, with some of the highest annual precipitation averages in the country outside the Pacific Northwest. Topography contributes to distinct microclimates on peaks and in valleys and coves. Precipitation, winds, and temperature are highly variable in the mountainous terrain of the study area, with elevation ranging from near 1,000 feet to 4,000 feet and slope and aspect playing major roles in determining temperature and moisture levels. Typically, temperature drops with increases in elevation. The lapse rate for a standard atmosphere is about 3.5° F per 1,000 feet, meaning that the range of temperatures in the study area is likely more than 10 degrees F. Due to many factors, the lapse rate will vary day to day and even throughout the day based on clouds, rainfall, and other factors.

Detailed 1971-2000 climatic norms data comes from the State Climate Office of North Carolina. Data availability varies by station. The information below is provided by the North Carolina Climate Office. Three sources of data are provided due to lack of available data from the Lake Lure station. At Lake Lure, the average monthly precipitation ranges from 4.03 inches in December to 5.96 inches in August. The average annual rainfall is 57.6 inches. At Tryon, NC (15 miles from the study area), the average maximum temperature ranges from 51.9 degrees F in January to 89.1 degrees F in July. Average minimum temperatures range from 30.3 degrees F in January to 66.8 degrees F in July. In Asheville (24 miles from the study area), the average annual snowfall is 15 inches.

The park is located in the vicinity of latitude 35.421 degrees north and longitude -82.188 degrees west. This latitude reflects a solar azimuth angle (angle of sun relative to the horizon) of 33 degrees on the winter solstice and approximately 79 degrees on the summer solstice. This information is useful for siting buildings and other structures for energy efficiency and solar comfort, both important in designing for sustainability.

## HYDROLOGY

The State of North Carolina contains all or portions of 17 river basins as seen within Figure 3.6. Chimney Rock State Park and the study area fall within the Broad River basin, and more specifically within the Upper Broad River Sub-basin (Figure 3.7). The study area also contains a number of named streams and rivers as seen in Figure 3.8.

The Rocky Broad River is the largest river within the park study area and originates in the western mountains of North Carolina. It flows southeast through the Foothills and Piedmont before entering South Carolina. The Rocky Broad River has four major tributaries, which include the Green, First Broad, Second Broad and North Pacolet rivers. The study area also includes a number of small reservoirs.

Figure 3.8 illustrates the various hydrological features within the Chimney Rock State Park study area, including Lake Lure and the Rocky Broad River and its tributaries. Streams to the south of Sugarloaf Mountain flow into the Green River and the Hungry River. Within this area, there are 165 N.C. Division of Water Quality (NCDWQ)-classified stream segments. Of these classifications, the two main classifications found are “B” and “C.” These main classifications are combined with “Tr,” a supplemental classification.

The highest quality classifications for streams and rivers are High Quality Waters and Outstanding Resource Waters. None of the rivers or streams within Chimney Rock State Park or the surrounding study area have either classification. The specific classifications found within the study area are “B-Tr,” “C,” and “C-Tr.”

- **Class B** (17 segments classified as “B-Tr”)

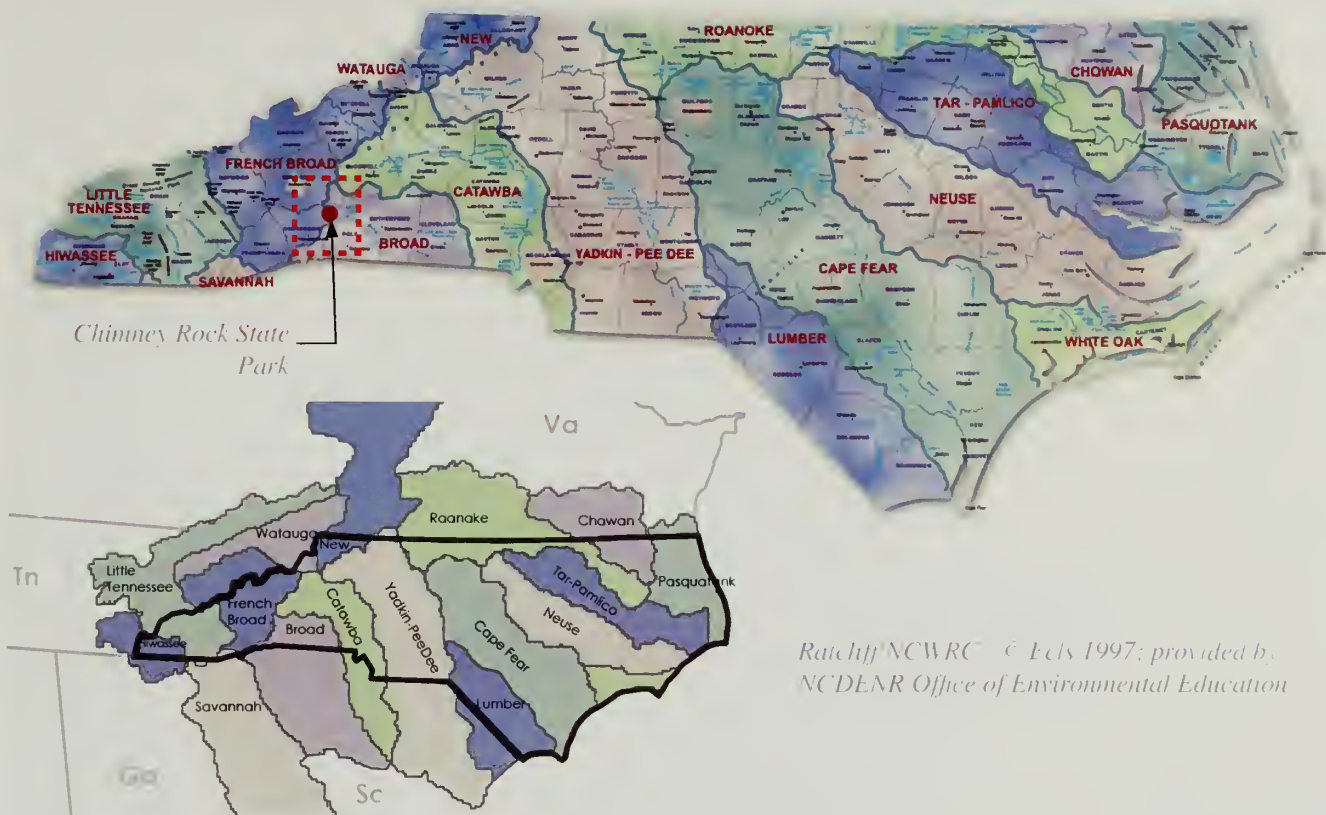
Waters protected for all Class C uses in addition to primary recreation. Primary recreational activities include swimming, skin diving, water skiing, and similar uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an organized manner or on a frequent basis.

- **Class C** (11 segments classified as “C” and 137 segments classified as “C-Tr”)

Waters protected for uses such as secondary recreation, fishing, wildlife, fish consumption, aquatic life



FIGURE 3.6: NORTH CAROLINA RIVER BASINS



including propagation, survival and maintenance of biological integrity, and agriculture. Secondary recreation includes wading, boating, and other uses involving human body contact with water where such activities take place in an infrequent, unorganized, or incidental manner.

#### • Trout Waters (Tr)

Supplemental classification intended to protect freshwaters that have conditions that sustain and allow for trout propagation and survival of stocked trout on a year-round basis.

Floodplain and wetlands within Chimney Rock State Park and the surrounding study area are scarce due to the mountainous topography of the area. Floodplain can be seen along a few of the stream and river basins such as Cane Creek and the Rocky Broad River in Figure 3.8 (data provided by the N.C. Division of Emergency Management 2007). Wetlands are only found around Lake Lure, and do not appear on Figure 3.8 due to the scale of the data (data provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2007).

Protection of water quality is an important aspect of the park's role in conservation. Those waters classified as Tr (the majority of waters in the study area) require maintenance of a 25-foot vegetative buffer on both sides based on State of North Carolina regulation. Additionally, surface waters within the park are subject to jurisdictional oversight by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the NCDWQ under Sections 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act.

FIGURE 3.7: RIVER SUBBASINS

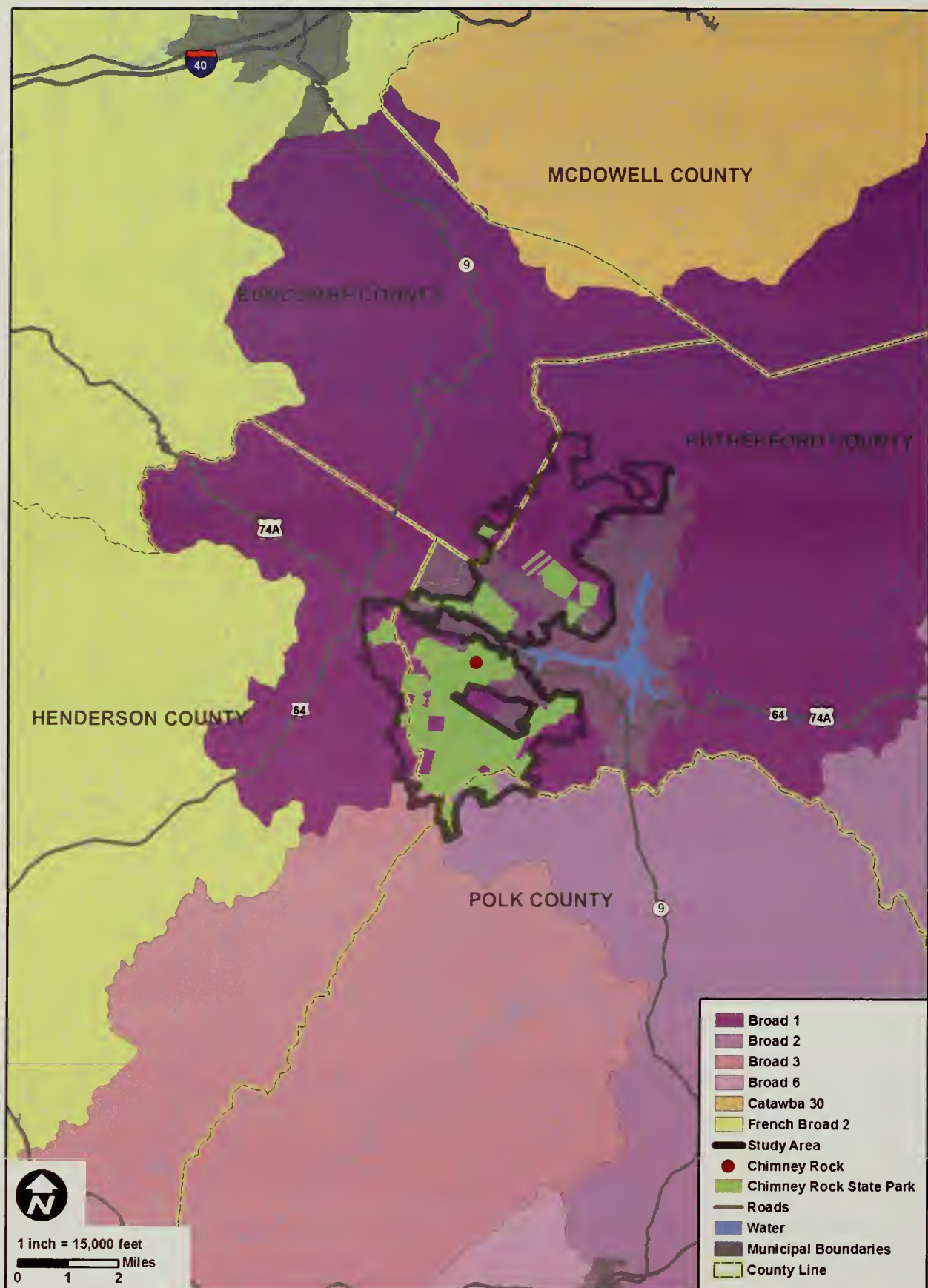
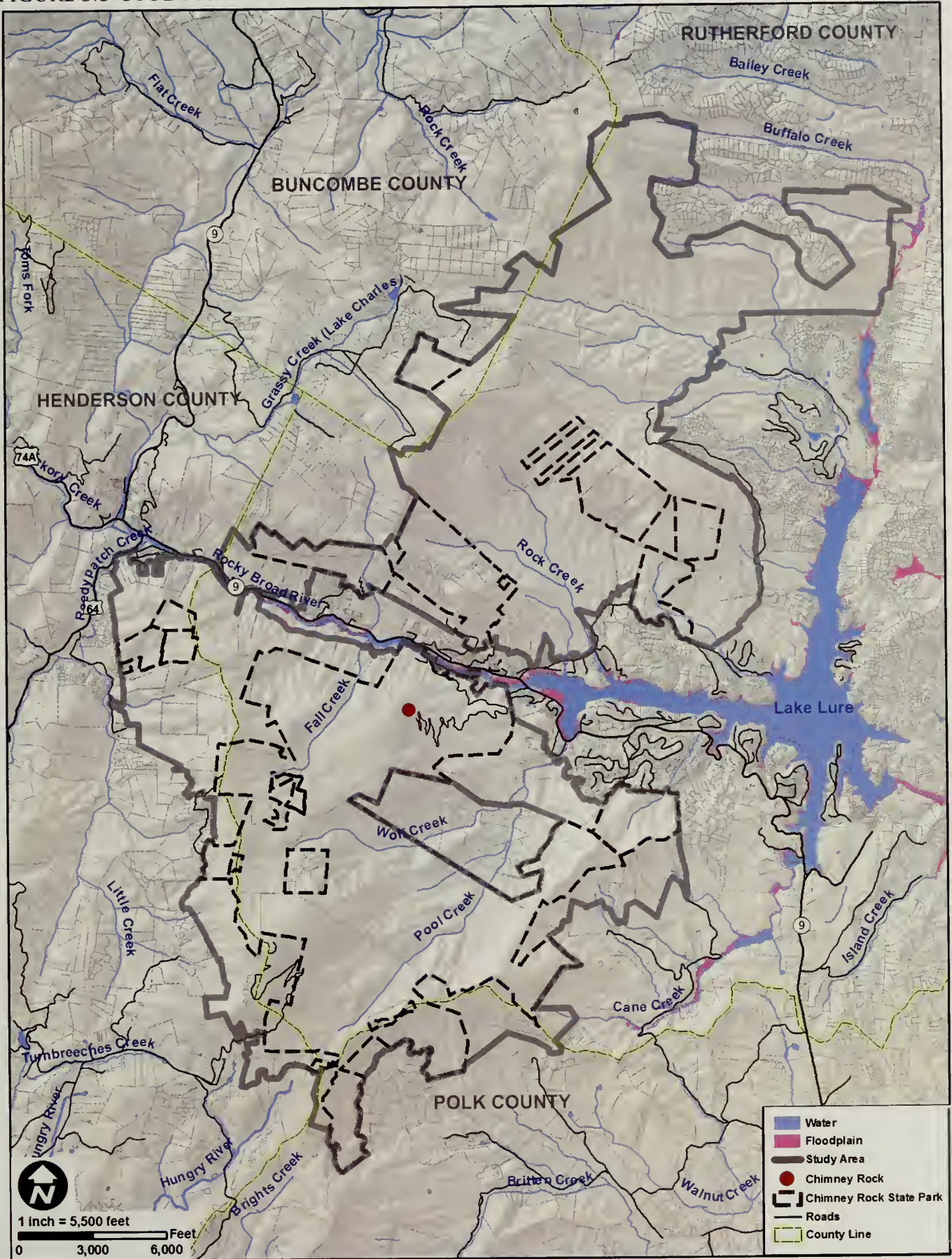




FIGURE 3.8: STUDY AREA HYDROLOGY





# GEOLOGY

Chimney Rock State Park is located within the Inner Piedmont Belt, which is the most intensely distorted and metamorphosed segment of the Piedmont. The metamorphic rocks range from 500 to 750 million years in age. They include gneiss and schist that have been intruded by younger granite rocks (See Figure 3.9 from the N.C. Geological Survey).

Figure 3.10 illustrates the geology of the park and surrounding study areas as characterized by the N.C. Geological Survey (1998). Primarily the area is Henderson Gneiss, Porphyroblastic Gneiss, Biotite Gneiss and Schist. The feature of Chimney Rock is Henderson Gneiss while Rumbling Bald is Henderson Gneiss and Biotite Gneiss and Schist. To the south, Sugarloaf Mountain contains Caesars Head Granite Gneiss, Granite Gneiss, and Garnet Mica Schist.

The 1998 NCGS data also indicates the presence of one large fault paralleling U.S. Route 64/74A and the Rocky Broad River from the west to Chimney Rock State Park in the east. One smaller fault is also found in the south-eastern study area by Cane Creek Mountain. An additional fault outside the study area by the Hungry River is also shown in Figure 3.10.

The study area holds dozens of fissure caves and includes two of the world’s longest augengneiss fissure caves at Bat Cave, which is owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy and Rumbling Bald. The caves’ hibernaculum qualities make them a valuable resource for animals.

Due to the geologic conditions of the study area, further geotechnical studies may be required during the design development phase for any proposed construction project within the park.

FIGURE 3.9: NORTH CAROLINA GEOLOGY

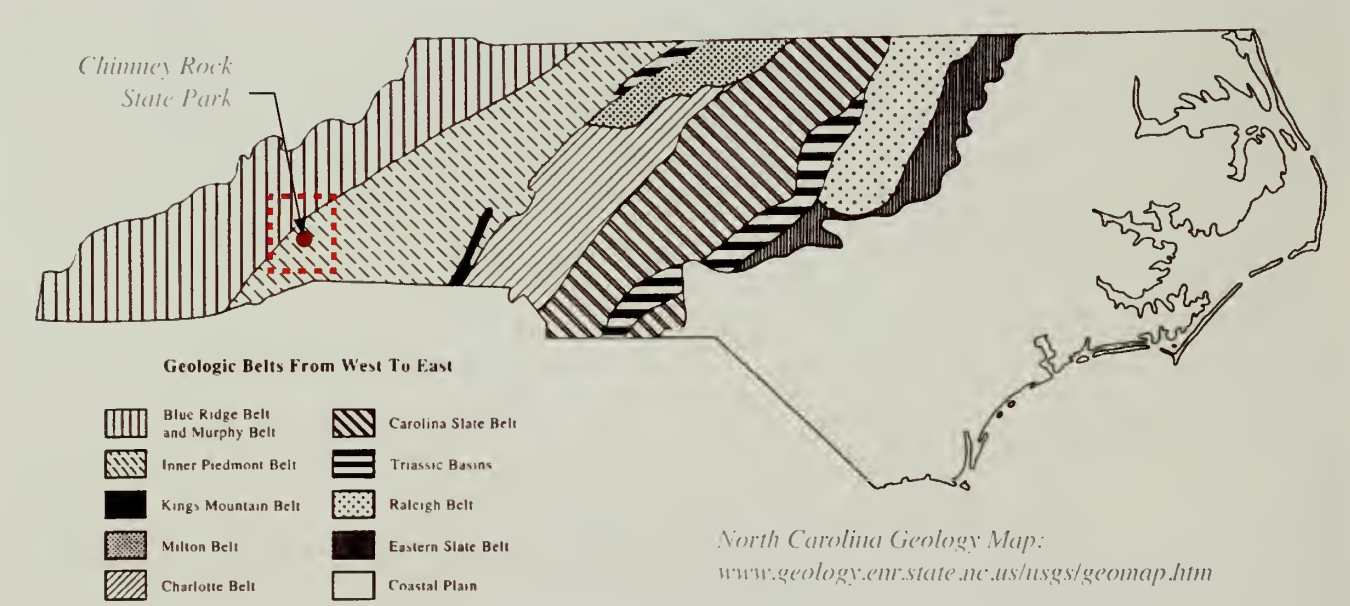
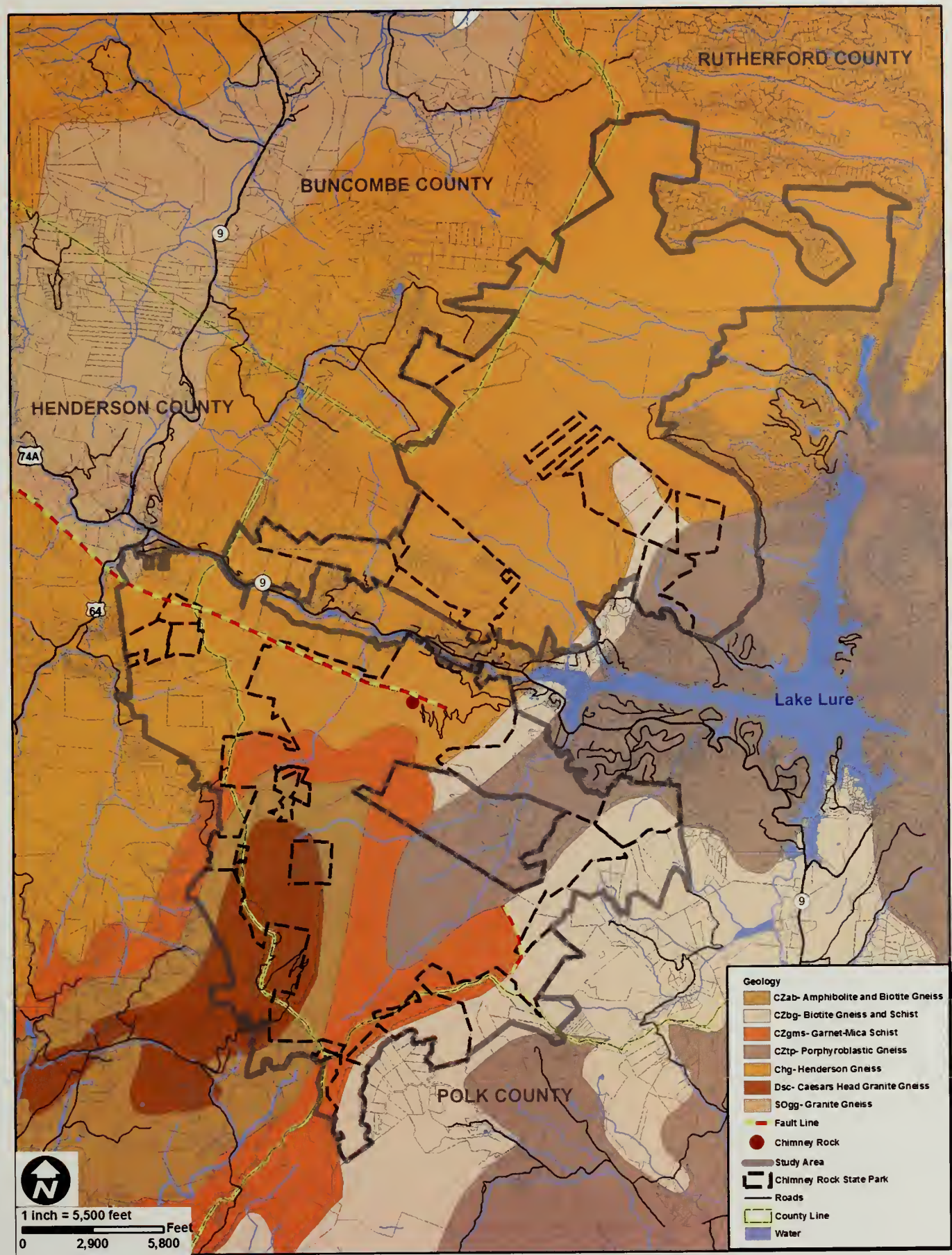




FIGURE 3.10: STUDY AREA GEOLOGY





## SOILS

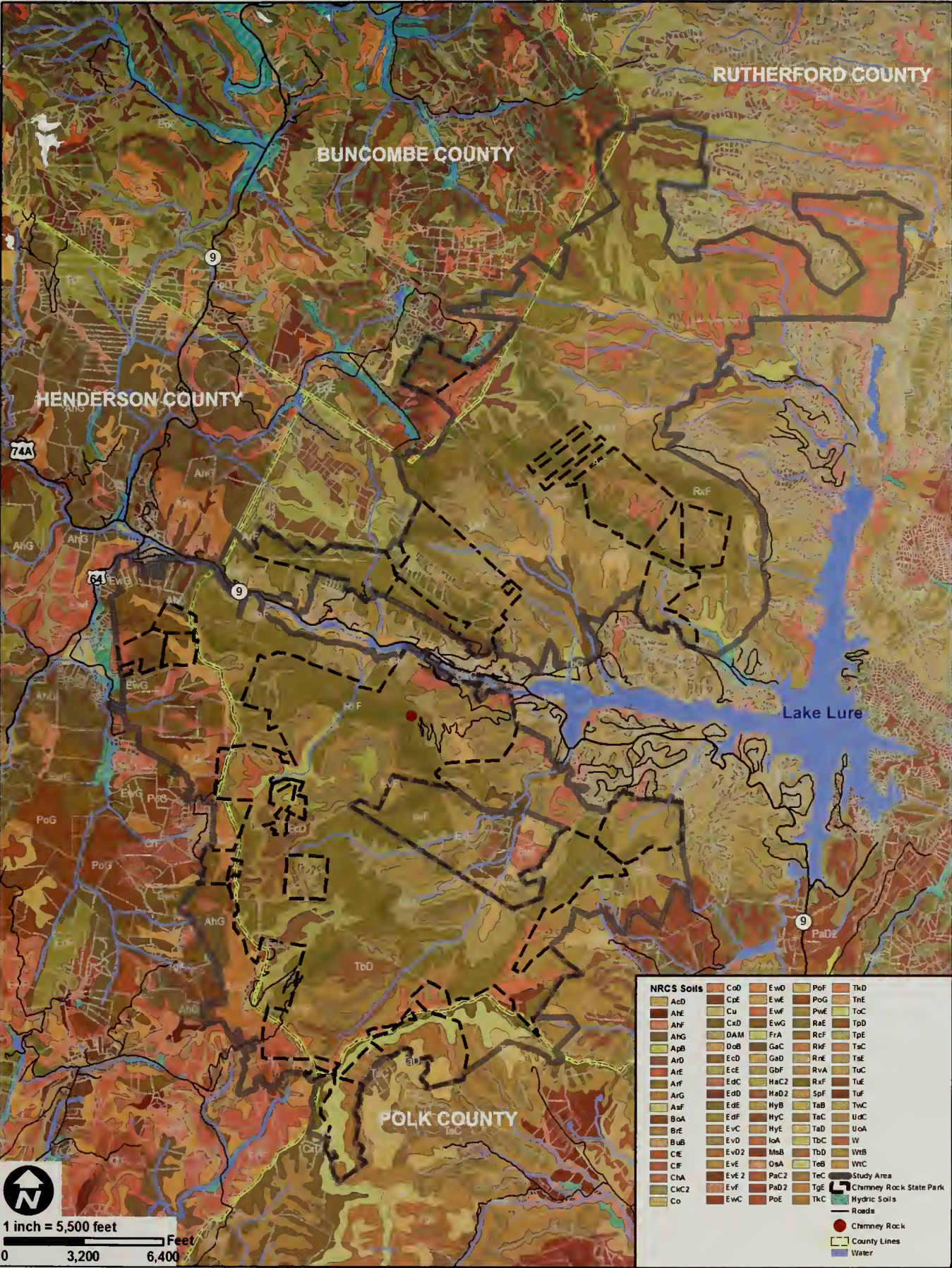
Figure 3.11 displays the many soil units in Chimney Rock State Park and the surrounding study area. Ninety-one different soil units are represented within this area from the data provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service. Most of the soils within the study area are highly erodible due to steep slopes. A majority of the soils within the park boundary are limited in terms of their ability to support septic fields, small commercial buildings, road construction, campsites, trails, picnic areas, and/or playgrounds because of steep slopes, rock, and poor drainage. The map also displays hydric soils, which indicate the presence of wetlands. Hydric soils are defined as soils that form under conditions of saturation, flooding, or ponding long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper levels. These soils can be found along several small creeks and tributaries of the Rocky Broad River.



*Typical example of exposed rock within the study area.*



FIGURE 3.11: STUDY AREA SOILS





# FLORA, FAUNA AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES

The Chimney Rock State Park study area contains a diverse combination of flora and fauna due to its relationship to two different physiographic regions: the southern Blue Ridge Mountains and the Piedmont. With a substantial gradient in elevation, a varied topography, and the wide range of geology, Chimney Rock State Park supports a diverse set of natural communities as well as a high diversity of plants and animals. The study area contains superb habitat for well-known animal species such as black bear (*Ursus americanus*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), gray fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) and red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), as well as rare species, including the green salamander (*Aneides aeneus*), the cerulean warbler (*Dendroica cerulean*), and the peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). The study area is particularly notable for habitats that support a large number of rare plant species, including white irisette (*Sysyrinchium dichotomum*), sweet white trillium (*Trillium simile*), and Carolina saxifrage (*Micranthes caroliniana*).



1 White-tailed deer  
2 Black bear

3 Red fox; by R. Laubenstein, US Fish & Wildlife Service  
4 Green salamander  
5 Peregrine falcon; by Aviceda  
6 Cerulean warbler  
7 Carolina saxifrage

This study area encompasses all or part of eight Significant Natural Heritage Areas (SNHA) as shown in Figure 3.12. Although heritage areas are often recognized for the presence of rare species, their presence alone does not determine the final significance placed on a particular site. Since biodiversity depends on the long-term conservation of a large number of different species and natural community types, heritage areas are rated based on the cumulative value of their rare species, their high quality natural communities, and their overall biodiversity arising from both rare and common species.



Significant natural areas are critical to the overall ecological, scientific, aesthetic, environmental health, recreational, educational, and cultural values that they provide. SNHA's are classified into one of four rankings:

**A - National Significance:** Considered to contain examples of natural communities, rare plant or animal populations, or other significant ecological features that are among the highest quality or best (top five or six) examples of their kind in the nation.

**B - State Significance:** Considered to contain examples of natural communities, rare plant or animal populations, or other significant ecological features that are among the highest quality or best (top five or six) examples of their kind in North Carolina, after any nationally significant examples. There may be comparable (or more significant) sites elsewhere in the nation or within the state.

**C - Regional Significance:** Considered to contain examples of natural communities, rare plant or animal populations, or other significant ecological features that are represented elsewhere in the state by better examples, but which are among the highest quality or best (top five or six) examples in their geographic region of the state.

**D - County Significance:** Considered to contain significant biological resources at the county level, but which do not rank at the regional (or higher) level.

Six out of the eight heritage areas in the Chimney Rock State Park study area have an "A" ranking, while the remaining two have a ranking of "B" and "C." "D" ranked communities were not found within the study area.

The eight heritage areas are part of the Hickory Nut Gorge Macrosite which is within a larger area known as the Southeast Escarpment Megasite. The Hickory Nut Gorge Macrosite consists of rugged peaks, gorges, ridge tops, deep coves, and most importantly, large tracts of contiguous forested land. This site is ecologically important for animals that require large areas for breeding and feeding and is ecologically significant because of the diversity and quality of its natural community types. Within the study area alone, nearly 600 plant species have been noted. Across the eight heritage areas that traverse the study area, there are approximately 90 rare plant species, 19 rare animal species, and 14 high quality natural community types (including Watch List species; see Figures 3.13 - 3.17).

## SIGNIFICANT NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS

### *Bald Mountain/Round Top Mountain (740 acres)*

This "A" ranked site is significant for high quality examples of several natural community types. These include Low Elevation Granitic Dome, which is scattered throughout the site. An excellent example of Chestnut Oak Forest extends across the upper slopes, and the lower slopes support extensive Montane Oak-Hickory Forest. Particularly notable are the examples of a Spray Cliff community at Rainbow Falls, and the nearly vertical Montane Acidic Cliff community directly opposite the park entrance, at Round Top Mountain. The site has records for seven rare plant species and four rare animal species that are state or federally-listed, including Carolina saxifrage (*Micranthes caroliniana*), lobed spleenwort (*Asplenium pinnatifidum*), and green salamander.



*Lobed spleenwort; by John Hilty*

#### Bat Cave/Blue Rock Mountain (549 acres)

This “A” ranked site contains one of the largest caves in North Carolina and the largest fissure cave in the world. The caves are located on the north-facing side of Hickory Nut Gorge, which contains a number of high quality forest communities, granitic domes, and rocky bluffs. Mature, high quality Rich Cove Forest occurs across the rocky low and mid-slopes below the bat caves, and good quality Chestnut Oak Forest occurs above the coves. A good quality example of the rare Carolina Hemlock Bluff occurs near the caves, and excellent examples of Low Elevation Granitic Dome are present. Biodiversity is quite high at this site and includes eight plant species and 10 animal species that are state or federally-listed. These include rock-fire clubmoss (*Huperzia porophila*), deer-hair bulrush (*Tricophorum cespitosum*), and Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*).



Deerhair bulrush; by Kristian Peters

#### Cane Creek Mountain (536 acres)

This “A” ranked site is located at the eastern end of Hickory Nut Gorge and is notable for its prominent peak, steep narrow ridges, and rock outcrops that stretch for almost one mile. It has six natural community types, including high quality Rich Cove Forest along the north slopes and summit. Excellent examples of Chestnut Oak Forest are common along the upper slopes, and Canada Hemlock Forest occurs across the lower slopes. Four plant species and four animal species are state or federally-listed, including sweet white trillium (*Trillium simile*) and lampshade spider (*Hypochilus coylei*).



Sweet white trillium; by Bill Swindaman

#### Chimney Rock Natural Area (1,488 acres)

This “A” ranked site contains the Chimney Rock attraction and is one of the most scenic and ecologically significant sites in the study area. It includes eight natural community types, including the very rare Montane Red Cedar–Hardwood Woodland. The park’s namesake peak dominates this rugged site, and most of the steep, northeast and southeast-facing slopes contain good examples of Low Elevation Granitic Dome, mature Rich Cove Forest, and Acidic Cove Forest. The northeast-facing granitic domes support many rare species, and this site has 17 plant species and seven animal species that are state or federally-listed. Notable species include the Peregrine falcon, green salamander, rock gnome lichen (*Gymnoderma lineare*), and Biltmore sedge (*Carex biltmoreana*).

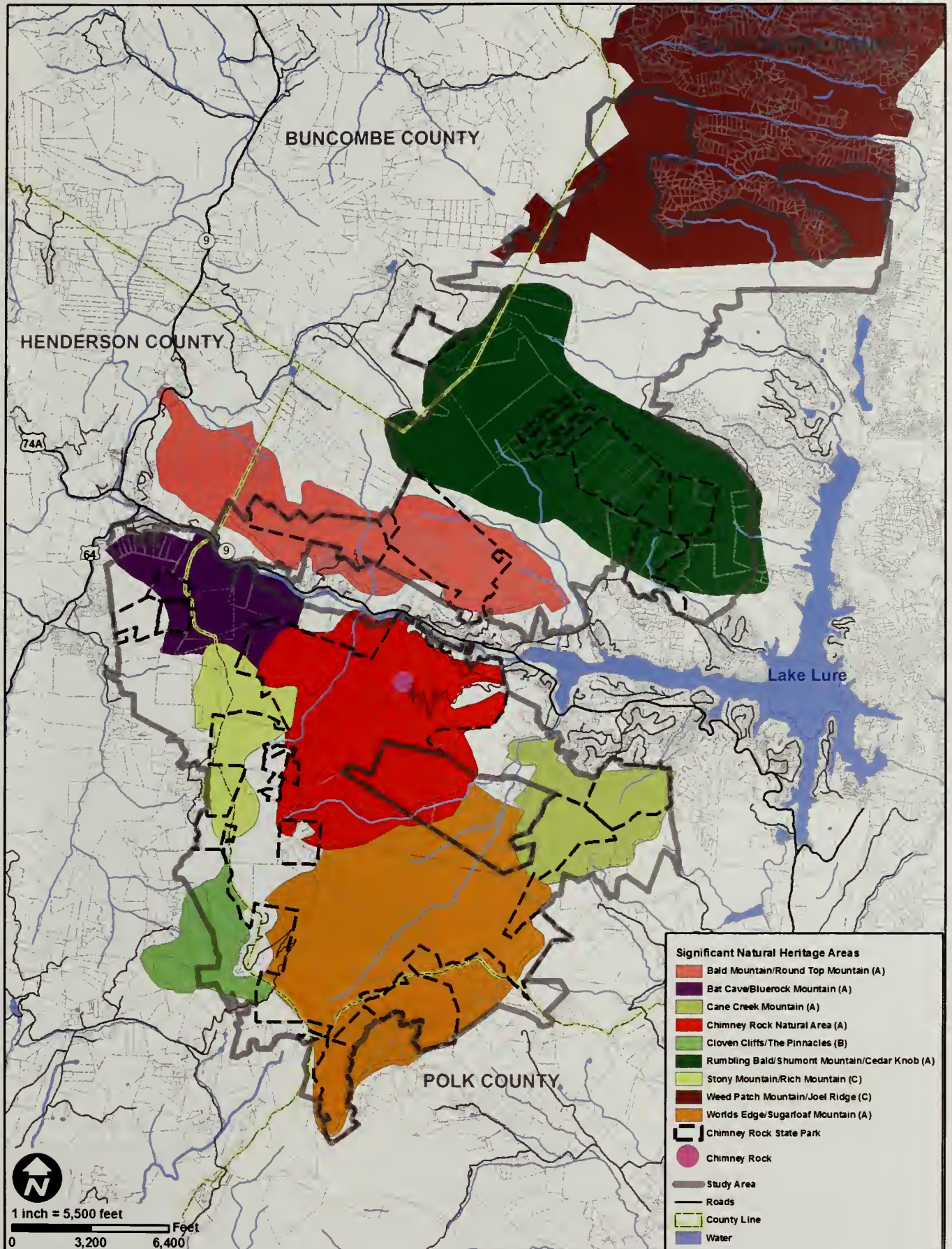


Rock gnome lichen; by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service





FIGURE 3.12: STUDY AREA SIGNIFICANT NATURAL HERITAGE AREAS





*Rumbling Bald/Shumont Mountain/Cedar Knob*  
(2,276 acres)

The dramatic cliffs at this “A” ranked site are a prominent feature of the study area and are located along the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Escarpment. It is one of the most significant sites in the Hickory Nut Gorge area due its large size, which supports high quality, contiguous examples of five natural community types. These communities are distributed throughout the site to form a habitat mosaic that allows for unusually high biodiversity. The site includes extensive examples of Low Elevation Granitic Dome, Montane Oak-Hickory Forest, and Chestnut Oak Forest community types. High quality Carolina Hemlock Bluff and Pine-Oak/Heath are also present. The site includes several large fissure caves, which provide habitat for several bat species, including the federally-listed eastern small-footed myotis (*Myotis leibii*). This site has 10 plant species and nine animal species that are state or federally-listed, including sweet pinesap (*Monotropsis odorata*), bleeding heart (*Dicentra eximia*), and eastern woodrat (*Neotoma floridana haematoreia*).



*Bleeding heart, by Liz West*

*Rich Mountain/Stony Mountain* (427 acres)

This “C” ranked site is characterized by two prominent peaks on the Rutherford/Henderson County line. Good quality examples of five natural community types occur across its steep and rocky upper slopes and forested lower slopes. Montane Oak-Hickory Forest occurs at the summits of both mountains, with Low Elevation Rocky Summit and Low Elevation Granitic Dome occurring at Stony Mountain and Rich Mountain, respectively. A small Carolina Hemlock Bluff occurs near the summit of Stony Mountain, and there is also an example of Pine-Oak/Heath along the exposed ridges. This is a fire-dependent ecosystem that is dominated by Table Mountain Pine (*Pinus pungens*). The site includes three plant species and one animal species that are state or federally listed, including Blue Ridge bindweed (*Calystegia catesbeiana* ssp. *sericata*) and white irisette.



*Bindweed; by J.M. Garg*

*Cloven Cliffs/The Pinnacles* (333 acres)

This “B” ranked site is located along the Henderson/Rutherford County border and is notable for the spectacular rock faces at Cloven Cliffs and the large, perched boulders at The Pinnacles. Although the flora at either of these rocky sites is not particularly well-developed or diverse, both sites afford sweeping vistas. Records exist for at least two NC Watch-Listed species, including Biltmore sedge and broadleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis latifolia*).





### Weed Patch Mountain/Joel Ridge (3,968 acres)

Located about one air mile north of Rumbling Bald and Shumont Mountain, this site is significant for its natural community types and presence of two rare species. Several north and south-facing slopes, steep coves, and east-west oriented ridges provide habitat for Montane Oak-Hickory and Pine-Oak/Heath forest. The coves are separated by the eastward-sloping ridges of the Weed Patch Mountain summit. Acidic Cove, Rich Cove, and Dry Oak-Hickory community types occur on the drier slopes and ridge tops. Two rare species are known to occur here, including broad leaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis latifolia*) and green salamander (*Aneides aeneus*), a Federal Species of Concern.



Broadleaf coreopsis; by Rob Sutter

### World's Edge/Sugarloaf Mountain (2,100 acres)

This "A" ranked site is another area that is notable for its size, rare species, and overall biodiversity. It takes its name from its location along the eastern edge of the Blue Ridge Escarpment, which falls away dramatically to the Piedmont. This site includes a spectacular, one-mile long series of steep, southeast-facing slopes that supports nine natural community types, including good quality examples of Chestnut Oak Forest and Pine-Oak/Heath. High quality examples of Low Elevation Granitic Dome occur across an extensive array of outcrops, and the very rare Semi-Exfoliated Basic Glade is found at this site. Rich Cove and Acidic Cove occur along the lower slopes, and the uncommon Montane Oak-Hickory Forest type also occurs. Seven plant species and five animal species are state or federally-listed, including shale-barren blazing star (*Liatris turgida*), yellow honeysuckle (*Lonicera flava*), and crevice salamander (*Plethodon yonahlossee*).



Yellow honeysuckle; by R. F. Jaimes

## NATURAL COMMUNITY TYPES

The descriptions and classifications appearing below for these natural community types are taken from *Classification of the Natural Communities of North Carolina, 3rd Approximation* (1990), by Mike Schafale and Alan Weakley.

Natural communities are characterized by vegetation composition and appearance, assemblages of animals or other organisms, topography, substrate, hydrology, soil characteristics, or other abiotic factors. Natural community types typically occupy subtly different environments that are the result of slight variations in substrate, topography, elevation, aspect, and moisture. The boundaries between community types are rarely distinct, and there is much heterogeneity along elevation and moisture gradients. The result is a constantly evolving vegetation mosaic across the landscape, and in order to efficiently articulate these boundaries, it is common for ecologists to classify community types based on the dominant canopy species, and that is the approach used here.

These ecological units are important because they house examples of unique species compositions and often rare species, they retain many important natural characteristics and ecosystem functions, and they are valuable indicators of a given area's biodiversity. The natural community types on the following pages are known to occur within the Chimney Rock State Park study area.

FIGURE 3.13: SUMMARY OF HIGH QUALITY NATURAL COMMUNITIES IN STUDY AREA

Rich Cove Forest	Montane Red Cedar-Hardwood Woodland
Acidic Cove Forest	Low Elevation Granitic Dome
Canada Hemlock Forest	Low Elevation Rocky Summit
Carolina Hemlock Bluff	Montane Acidic Cliff
Pine-Oak/Heath	Spray Cliff
Chestnut Oak Forest	Low Elevation Seep
Montane Oak-Hickory Forest	Semi-Exfoliated Basic Glade

#### *Rich Cove Forest*

Rich Cove Forest community types are widespread and abundant in the Southern Appalachians, and they typically occur in protected coves and slopes on low to moderate elevation sites, frequently with a north-facing aspect. The soils are generally rich, moisture is high, and biological diversity is correspondingly high. These forests are characterized by a diverse and lush herb layer and a closed canopy dominated by a diverse mixture of species, including sweet birch (*Betula lenta*), basswood (*Tilia americana*), and cucumber tree (*Magnolia fraseri*), among others. Rich Coves are one of the most species-diverse community types in eastern North America, especially for the number of tree and herb species that can occur in them.

#### *Acidic Cove Forest*

This community type is common in the mountainous regions of North Carolina and in sheltered sites at low to moderate elevations outside of the mountains. It often occurs in narrow rocky gorges, steep ravines, and sheltered valleys and slopes where it is generally moist and humid. These communities occur over more nutrient-poor soils than Rich Cove Forests, primarily due to the presence of relatively acidic soils.

Although it shares a number of canopy dominant species with Rich Cove Forests, the canopy tends to be dominated by a more acid-tolerant subset of species, including red maple (*Acer rubrum*), tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), and Canada hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). This community type is also differentiated from Rich Cove Forests by its shrub layer, which is distinctly and characteristically dominated by ericaceous species such as mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*) that often form dense thickets.

#### *Canada Hemlock Forest*

This community is generally less mesic than cove forest sites and occurs in a variety of different locations and aspects including sheltered coves and slopes at middle to high elevations in the mountains and Piedmont. These forests are strongly dominated by Canada hemlock, and they are severely threatened due to the presence of the hemlock woolly adelgid (*Adelges tsugae*), a non-native pest that has affected hemlocks throughout eastern North America. No native predator exists for these insects.

#### *Carolina Hemlock Bluff*

This community is considered rare because its dominant species, Carolina hemlock (*Tsuga caroliniana*), is restricted to southern Virginia, western North Carolina, eastern Tennessee, northwestern South Carolina, and northern Georgia. Sites where it is capable of becoming dominant are uncommon. Carolina Hemlock Bluffs usually occur on rocky acidic soils on steep slopes, bluffs, or gorge walls. Like the Canada hemlock Forest, this community type is under attack from the hemlock woolly adelgid.

#### *Pine-Oak/Heath*

This community type occurs on very dry, acidic soils of exposed ridgetops and steep, south-facing crests at low to middle elevations. The best examples of this community type occurs in Hickory Nut Gorge along a





few prominent steep and rocky south-facing ridgelines. This is a heterogeneous community that is commonly dominated by stunted and gnarled pine species, particularly Virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*), Table Mountain pine (*P. pungens*), and pitch pine (*P. rigida*). The shrub layer is generally very dense and is dominated by ericaceous shrubs, most commonly mountain laurel and blueberry (*Vaccinium sp.*) These communities are among the driest and most exposed on the landscape and are unusually prone to wind and lightning. They are believed to be heavily dependent on periodic fire, sometimes severe, in order to maintain the shade-intolerant species that dominate.

#### *Chestnut Oak Forest*

This is one of the more common mountain forest communities at low to moderate elevations, and is found throughout Hickory Nut Gorge. The canopy is generally closed, with canopy gaps occurring around rock outcrops. The canopy can be diverse, but is strongly dominated by Chestnut oak (*Quercus montana*) and scarlet oak (*Q. coccinea*), with lesser amounts of northern red oak (*Q. rubra*), white oak (*Q. alba*), various hickory species (*Carya sp.*), and other cove forest species.

#### *Montane Oak-Hickory Forest*

This community type is widespread in the mountains of North Carolina, although most prominently south of the Asheville Basin. However, in the South Mountains of Rutherford County, it is mostly limited to the Hickory Nut Gorge area. It occurs on dry to moist slopes and ridgetops that are somewhat exposed at low to high elevations. The canopy is generally closed and is dominated by a mixture of oaks and hickories, with white oak, chestnut oak, northern red oak, mockernut hickory (*Carya alba*), and pignut hickory (*C. glabra*) being the most common.

#### *Montane Red Cedar – Hardwood Woodland*

This is a newly described community type that covers rare, open-canopy woodlands on shallow soils over bedrock, containing plants indicative of neutral soil conditions. Eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) is abundant, but other oaks and hickories are often also abundant.

#### *Low Elevation Granitic Dome*

This community type occurs on upper slopes and summits across the western Piedmont and lower parts of the Blue Ridge and is distinguished from other rock community types by the absence of crevices and deep soil pockets, so that shallow soil mats determine vegetation. The rock surfaces are steep to gently sloping exposures of smooth, exfoliating granite or similar massive igneous or metamorphic rock, such as granitic gneiss. The smooth surfaces and lack of crevices on exfoliation domes create an environment that lacks many of the microhabitats that occur on craggier outcrops.

#### *Low Elevation Rocky Summit*

The Low Elevation Rocky Summit occurs on exposed summits at moderate to low elevations in the mountains and the Piedmont. These rare communities are structurally similar to High Elevation Rocky Summits, but are distinct due to the lower elevation and the flora assemblages, as they generally occur under 4,000 ft. in elevation. They can be characterized by the presence of rugged uneven vertical and horizontal rock with little or no canopy present. These sites are typically open and dominated by herbaceous species, but will occasionally support scattered, stunted trees around the margins. Numerous lichens and mosses are also common. These communities are believed to persist in the early stages of primary succession due to a combination of resistant rocks, poor soil development, extreme weather conditions, and natural disturbance, primarily wind, snow, and ice.

#### *Montane Acidic Cliff*

This is an uncommon community that occurs on lower to mid slopes where steep to vertical rock is exposed over an area large enough to create a break in the surrounding forest canopy. This is a heterogeneous type, even within a single site, and may range from dry sites on bare rock with shallow soil pockets, to wetter and more sheltered sites on north-facing slopes, to saturated seepage areas. The best developed examples are characterized by bare rock and are dominated by mosses and lichens with only scattered woody species. These sites typically lack a closed shrub layer; however, scattered and stunted trees and shrubs may occur.



### *Spray Cliff*

This community type occurs around waterfalls, and although it is scattered throughout the mountains, it is rare in the upper Piedmont. Examples vary widely, depending on the amount and dependability of spray, but all are generally indicative of unusually equitable and stable environments, where the humidity is high and the moisture supply is essentially constant. Most have very a distinctive flora dominated by bryophytes, mosses, and liverworts, but they may also contain rare species such as Carolina or Carey's saxifrage (*Micranthes caroliniana* and *S. careyana*).



*Chimney Rock State Park's natural environment provides an ideal habitat for a diverse range of plants and animals*





### *Low Elevation Seep*

This community type generally occurs in low lying areas along or near small streams, with seepage generally flowing towards a larger adjacent stream. They are fairly common, but never extensive, and are usually saturated and mucky. The canopy is usually closed and is typically dominated by species such as yellow poplar, red maple, sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*), and river birch (*Betula nigra*).

### *Semi-Exfoliated Basic Glade*

This is a newly-described community type that is believed to be rare. It occurs on gently to moderately sloping low elevation outcrops with irregular surfaces but few crevices, and supports plants characteristic of higher pH conditions. Their rocky structure is intermediate between Granitic Domes and Rocky Summits, and they are vegetatively similar to Low Elevation Granitic Domes, with plants occurring in grassy mats.

## STATUS AND SUPPLEMENTARY DESIGNATIONS FOR RARE PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES

Animal and plant species that are state-listed as Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern are protected under N.C. General Statutes by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and the N.C. Plant Conservation Program, respectively. Plant or animal species classified as Significantly Rare or Watch List do not have legal protection. Species with federal classifications of Endangered or Threatened are protected by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under the Endangered Species Act of 1973. Species that are listed as Candidate or Federal Species of Concern (FSC) have no federal protection. Rare plant and animal species known to occur in the study area are listed in Figures 3.13 and 3.14. Status codes are defined below.

E	Endangered	A species in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant part of its range.
T	Threatened	A species that is likely to become an Endangered species in the near future throughout all of its range or a significant part of it.
SC	Special Concern	A species which has some evidence of vulnerability, but not enough data to support a listing of Endangered or Threatened.
SR	Significantly Rare	Indicates rarity and the need for population monitoring and possible conservation for species currently listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Special Concern.

FIGURE 3.14: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL STATUS PLANT SPECIES IN STUDY AREA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS	FEDERAL STATUS
<b>Rare Plant Species</b>			
<i>Amelanchier sanguinea</i>	Roundleaf Serviceberry	SR-P	—
<i>Arabis patens</i>	Spreading Rockcress	SR-T	—
<i>Asplenium bradleyi</i>	Bradley's Spleenwort	SR-P	—
<i>Asplenium pinnatifidum</i>	Lobed Spleenwort	SR-P	—
<i>Calamagrostis porteri</i>	Porter's Reed Grass	SR-P	—
<i>Cardamine dissecta</i>	Dissected Toothwort	SR-P	—
<i>Carex baileyi</i>	Bailey's Sedge	SR-P	—
<i>Celastrus scandens</i>	American Bittersweet	SR-P	—
<i>Clematis catesbyana</i>	Coastal Virgin's-bower	SR-P	—
<i>Cyrto-hypnum pygmaeum</i>	Pygmy Cyrto-hypnum Moss	SR-O	—
<i>Dicentra eximia</i>	Bleeding Heart	SR-P	—
<i>Draba ramosissima</i>	Branching Draba	SR-P	—
<i>Fothergilla major</i>	Large Witch-alder	SR-T	—
<i>Gymnoderma lineare</i>	Rock Gnome Lichen	T	E
<i>Hexalectris spicata</i>	Crested Coralroot Orchid	SR-P	—
<i>Huperzia porophila</i>	Rock-fir Clubmoss	SR-P	—
<i>Isotria medeoloides</i>	Small Whorled Pogonia	E	T
<i>Liatris squarrulosa</i>	Earle's Blazing-star	SR-P	—
<i>Liatris turgida</i>	Shale-barren Blazing-star	SR-T	—
<i>Micranthes caroliniana</i>	Carolina Saxifrage	SR-T	—
<i>Monotropsis odorata</i>	Sweet Pinesap	SR-T	FSC
<i>Packera millefolium</i>	Divided-leaf Ragwort	T	FSC
<i>Parthenium auriculatum</i>	Glade Wild Quinine	SR-T	—
<i>Prenanthes alba</i>	White Rattlesnakeroot	SR-P	—
<i>Primula meadia</i>	Eastern Shooting-Star	SR-P	—
<i>Robinia hispida</i> var. <i>kelseyi</i>	Kelsey's Locust	SR-O	—
<i>Rhynchospora alba</i>	Northern White Beaksedge	SR-P	—
<i>Sisyrinchium dichotomum</i>	White Irisette	E	E
<i>Solidago simulans</i>	Granite Dome Goldenrod	SR-L	FSC
<i>Trichophorum cespitosum</i>	Deerhair Bulrush	SR-D	—
<i>Trillium simile</i>	Sweet White Trilium	SR-L	—

Notes:

State Status: E - Endangered; T - Threatened; SC - Special Concern; SR - Significantly Rare; W - Watch List

Federal Status: E - Endangered; FSC - Federal Species of Concern; T - Threatened



Species that are listed as Significantly Rare (SR) also include a supplementary designation indicating if its range. Supplementary designation definitions are defined below.

L	Limited	The range of the species is limited to North Carolina and adjacent states (endemic or nearly so). These are species that may have 20-50 populations in North Carolina, and their fate depends largely on their conservation in North Carolina.
T	Throughout	The species is rare throughout its entire range, with <100 populations total.
D	Disjunct	The species is disjunct to North Carolina from its main range in a different part of the country or world.
P	Peripheral	The species is at the periphery of its range in North Carolina, mostly in habitats that are unusual in North Carolina.
O	Other	The species' range is sporadic or cannot be described by the other categories.

FIGURE 3.15: SUMMARY OF SPECIAL STATUS ANIMAL SPECIES IN STUDY AREA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	STATE STATUS	FEDERAL STATUS
<b>Rare Animal Species</b>			
<i>Aneides aeneus</i>	Green Salamander	E	FSC
<i>Crotalus horridus</i>	Timber Rattlesnake	SC	—
<i>Dendroica cerulea</i>	Cerulean Warbler	SC	FSC
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon	E	—
<i>Hypochilus coylei</i>	Lampshade Spider	SR	—
<i>Myotis grisescens</i>	Gray Myotis	E	E
<i>Myotis leibii</i>	Eastern Small-footed Myotis	SC	FSC
<i>Myotis sodalis</i>	Indiana Bat	E	E
<i>Nesticus brimleyi</i>	Nesticid Spider	SR	—
<i>Plethodon amplus</i>	Blue Ridge Gray-cheeked Salamander	SR	—
<i>Plethodon yonahlosse pop. 1</i>	Crevice Salamander	SC	—
<i>Pseudosinella gisini</i>	Cave-obligate Springtail	SR	—

Notes:

State Status: E - Endangered; T - Threatened; SC - Special Concern; SR - Significantly Rare; W - Watch List

Federal Status: E - Endangered; FSC - Federal Species of Concern

Watch List species include those that are rare or otherwise threatened with serious decline, but for which current information does not justify placement on the main rare species list as Endangered, Threatened, Special Concern, or Significantly Rare. These species are additional indicators of significant habitats, and their presence should be considered in planning natural area protection efforts, although with less weight than higher priority rare species and natural communities. Watch List species can be found in Figures 3.16 and 3.17.

FIGURE 3.16: SUMMARY OF WATCH LIST ANIMAL SPECIES IN STUDY AREA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<b>Watch List Animal Species</b>	
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common Raven
<i>Falco sparverius</i>	American Kestrel
<i>Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum</i>	Eastern Milk Snake
<i>Limnothlypis swainsonii</i>	Swainson's Warbler
<i>Myotis septentrionalis</i>	Northern Long-eared Myotis
<i>Neotoma floridana haematoresia</i>	Southern Appalachian Eastern Woodrat
<i>Sorex hoyi winnemana</i>	Southern Pygmy Shrew

FIGURE 3.17: SUMMARY OF WATCH LIST PLANT SPECIES IN STUDY AREA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<b>Watch List Plant Species</b>	
<i>Anemone quinquefolia</i>	Wood Anemone
<i>Aralia racemosa</i>	American Spikenard
<i>Aronia prunifolia</i>	Purple Chokecherry
<i>Asplenium montanum</i>	Mountain Spleenwort
<i>Asplenium resiliens</i>	Blackstem Spleenwort
<i>Calystegia catesbeiana</i>	Blue Ridge Bindweed
<i>Campanulastrum americanum</i>	Tall Bellflower
<i>Carex albursina</i>	White Bear Sedge
<i>Carex biltmoreana</i>	Biltmore Sedge
<i>Carex leavenworthii</i>	Leavenworth's Sedge
<i>Carex ruthii</i>	Ruth's Sedge
<i>Castilleja coccinea</i>	Scarlet Indian-paintbrush
<i>Chamaelirium luteum</i>	Devil's Bit
<i>Clematis catesbyana</i>	Coastal Virgin's-bower
<i>Coreopsis latifolia</i>	Broadleaf Coreopsis
<i>Cornus alternifolia</i>	Alternate-leaf Dogwood
<i>Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens</i>	Large Yellow Lady's-slipper
<i>Dicanthelium latifolium</i>	Broadleaf Witch Grass
<i>Dicentra cucullaria</i>	Dutchman's Breeches
<i>Diplazium pycnocarpon</i>	Glade Fern
<i>Drosera rotundifolia</i>	Roundleaf Sundew
<i>Eupatorium steelii</i>	Appalachian Joe-Pye-Weed
<i>Fallopia scandens var. 1</i>	Crested Climbing Buckwheat
<i>Fothergilla major</i>	Large Witch Alder
<i>Galax urceolata</i>	Galax
<i>Goodyera repens</i>	Lesser Rattlesnake-orchid
<i>Heuchera parviflora var. parviflora</i>	Grotto Alumroot
<i>Heuchera parviflora</i>	Littleleaf Alumroot





FIGURE 3.17: (CONT'D.) SUMMARY OF WATCH LIST PLANT SPECIES IN STUDY AREA

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<b>Watch List Plant Species</b>	
<i>Huperzia appressa</i>	Appalachian Fir-clubmoss
<i>Hydrophyllum canadense</i>	Blunt-leaf Waterleaf
<i>Hyrangea cinerea</i>	Ashy Hydrangea
<i>Ilex ambigua</i>	Carolina Holly
<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Butternut
<i>Krigia montana</i>	Mountain Cynthia
<i>Lonicera flava</i>	Yellow Honeysuckle
<i>Micranthes careyana</i>	Carey's Saxifrage
<i>Micranthes micranthidifolia</i>	Lettuce-leaf Saxifrage
<i>Muhlenbergia mexicana</i>	Mexican Muhly
<i>Muhlenbergia sylvatica</i>	Woodland Muhly
<i>Panax quinquefolius</i>	Ginseng
<i>Pellaea atropurpurea</i>	Purple Stem Cliff-Bake
<i>Penstemon smallii</i>	Small's Beardtongue
<i>Philadelphus hirsutus</i>	Hairy Mock-Orange
<i>Philadelphus inodorus</i>	Scentless Mock-Orange
<i>Pinus strobus</i>	Eastern White Pine
<i>Ptelea trifoliata</i>	Wafer Ash
<i>Rhododendron minus</i>	Carolina Rhododendron
<i>Salix humilis</i>	Tall Prairie Willow
<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>	Bloodroot
<i>Sphenopholis intermedia</i>	Prairie Wedgescale
<i>Stenanthium gramineum</i>	Eastern Featherbells
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	American Arborvitae
<i>Tsuga canadensis</i>	Eastern Hemlock
<i>Tsuga caroliniana</i>	Carolina Hemlock
<i>Trillium rugelii</i>	Southern Nodding Trillium
<i>Trillium cuneatum</i>	Little Sweet Betsy
<i>Verbesina virginica</i> var. <i>virginica</i>	Common Frostweed
<i>Viola blanda</i>	Smooth White Violet

## LAND COVER

Figure 3.18 illustrates the land cover for Chimney Rock State Park and the surrounding study area. The data for this map was obtained from the North Carolina Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (CGIA) (1996). This map displays 16 different land cover types based on analysis from satellite imagery. The most common types of land cover shown on the map are mixed hardwoods (77% of study area), mixed hardwoods/conifers (13%), and mountain conifers (4%). The Town of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village can be seen as high intensity developed areas. This map helps to illustrate the densely wooded and contiguous forests in the area of the park.

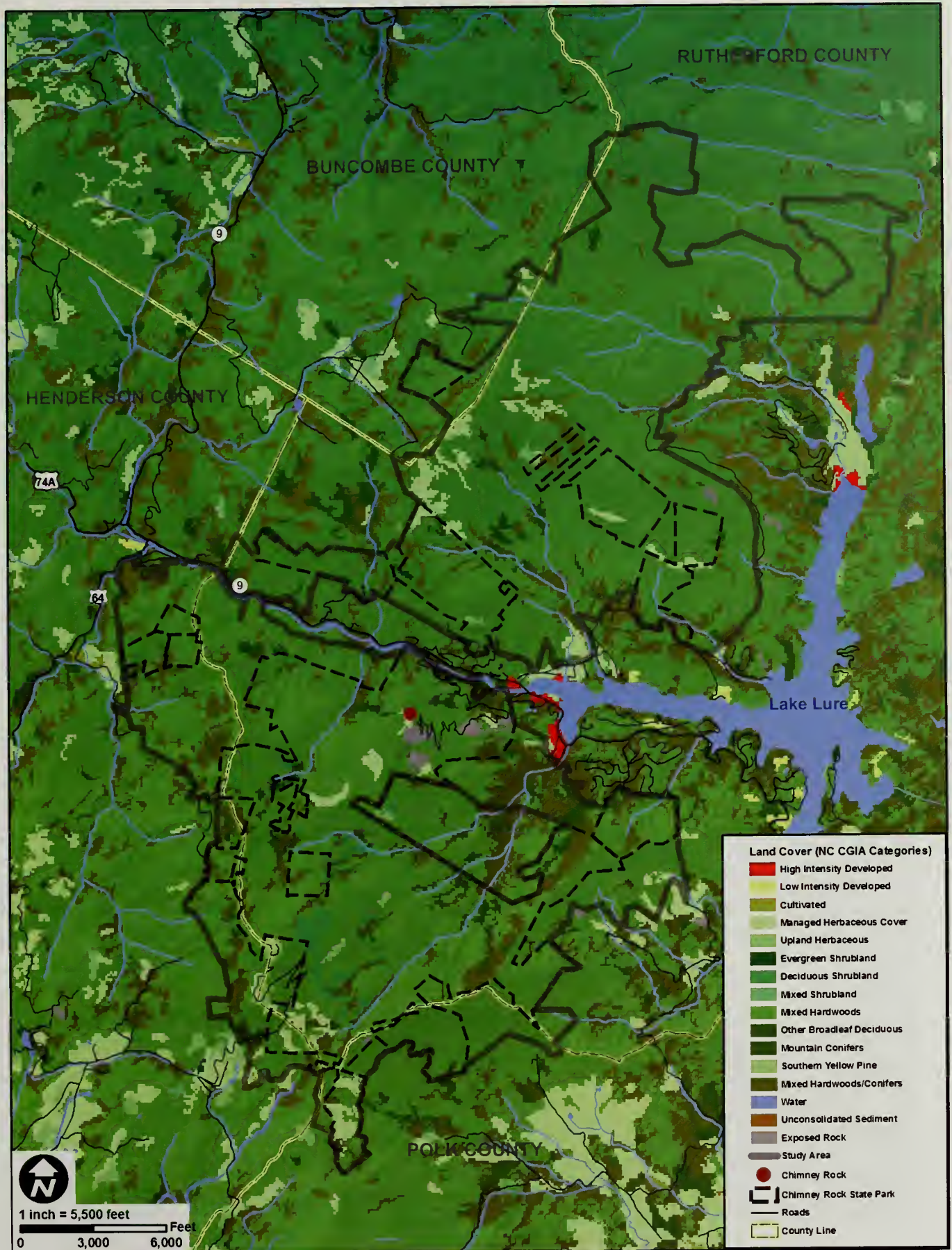


*View looking east to Lake Lure showing tree cover in and around the park*





FIGURE 3.18: STUDY AREA LAND COVER





## BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE HABITAT

Biodiversity and wildlife habitat assessment data was obtained through the Conservation Planning Tool for North Carolina initially developed by an assessment team made up of N.C. Natural Heritage Program staff, and then reviewed by field ecologists, biologists and botanists from several state environmental agencies. This data compiles a multitude of complex variables that contribute to biodiversity and habitat assessment. Generally, for assessment of biodiversity, the available data represents three major components of ecological resources. These are: biodiversity, both of aquatic and terrestrial species and communities; large scale terrestrial landscapes, including core wildlife habitats and habitat connectors; and other lands of particular importance to ecosystem processes, such as riparian buffers and wetlands.

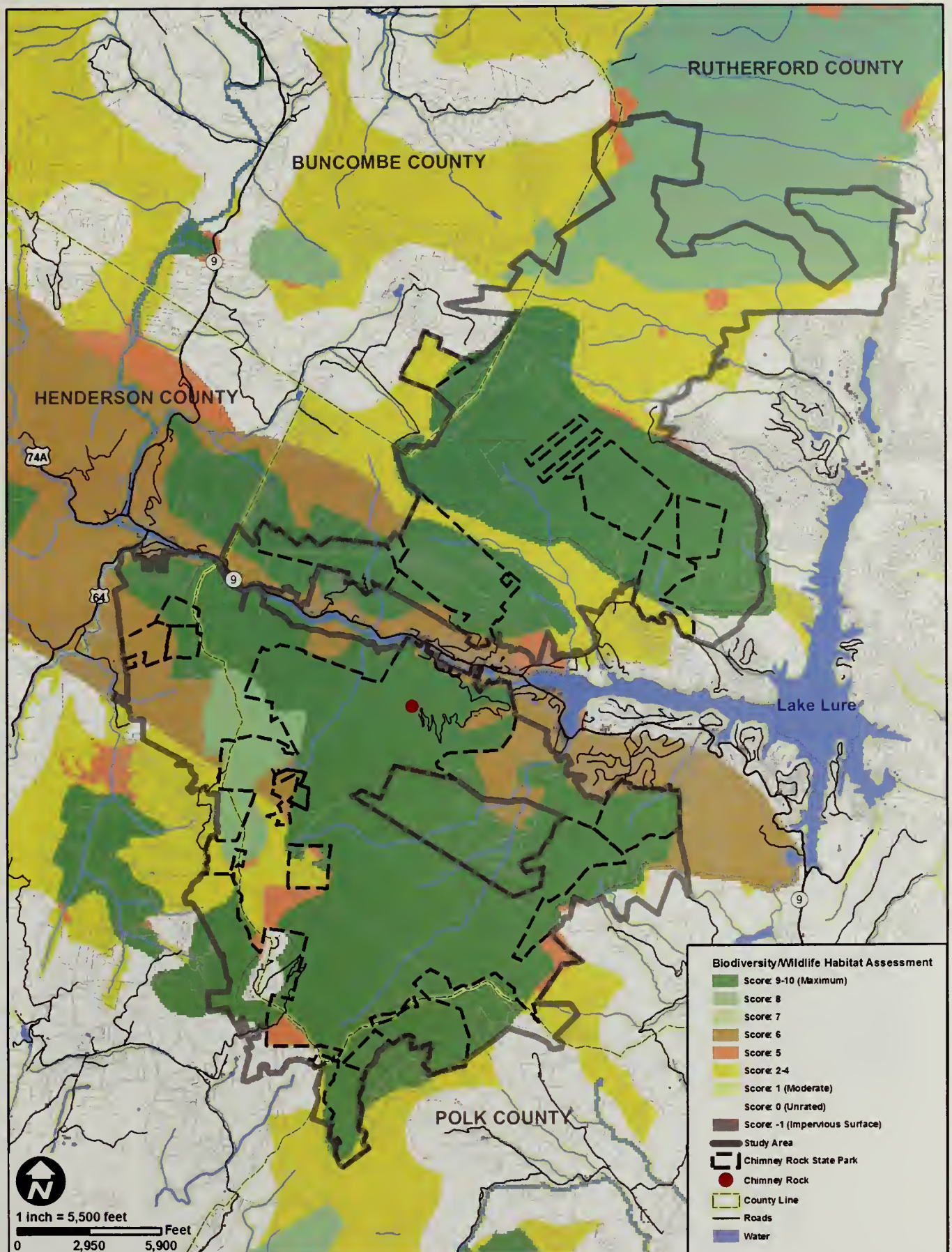
As seen in Figure 3.19, a majority of the study area within Chimney Rock State Park are ranked at 9-10, the highest relative conservation value for biodiversity and wildlife habitat. The map shows “islands” of these high rankings bordered by middle to low relative conservation values.



*Flame azalea located within the study area*



FIGURE 3.19: STUDY AREA BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE HABITAT ASSESSMENT



## FIRE MANAGEMENT

Hickory Nut Gorge supports a number of fire prone and fire adapted natural community types and species, particularly on dry, south-facing slopes and ridges that are dominated by Pine-Oak Heath natural communities. The long term fire history of the area is largely unknown and although some natural community types such as the moist cove forests and hemlock forests are not generally considered to be fire adapted, fire is known to be ecologically important in this part of the southern Blue Ridge Escarpment. Evidence of past fires are common across the landscape and several wildfires have occurred in the Hickory Nut Gorge in the past decade. A fire management plan incorporating both prescribed fire and wildfire response will be developed collaboratively by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, the N.C. Division of Forest Resources, local fire departments, and land conservation organizations.



*Fire management at Chimney Rock State Park.*





*Prescribed burning has ecological importance in the southern Blue Ridge Escarpment.*

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# NEEDS ASSESSMENT

## INTRODUCTION

In order to develop an appropriate design program for Chimney Rock State Park, it is important to consider the outdoor and recreational needs of a diverse range of past, present and future visitors. The assessment of these needs helps to define development alternatives for Chimney Rock State Park. A definition of "need" comes from several sources: an examination of state and national surveys of outdoor needs and use in western North Carolina, opinion surveys, and direct public input. It is clear through public input that potential users of Chimney Rock State Park are interested in a variety of park and recreational facilities. User trends and needs for specific recreational spaces and facilities have been identified both throughout the Hickory Nut Gorge region and the western part of North Carolina.

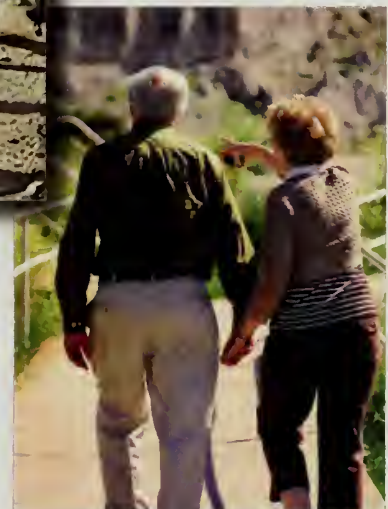
## DETERMINING REGIONAL & LOCAL NEED FOR NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

Chimney Rock State Park is a world-class park and must be designed, developed and managed to meet diverse visitor needs. Therefore, the need for natural resource-based recreation was examined through local, regional, and national sources of input. Examples include the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, the National Survey of Recreation and the Environment, online surveys and public comment forms specific to Chimney Rock State Park, and public input from a planning workshop. Specifically, this chapter:

- Examines existing natural resource-based recreation in western North Carolina and the Hickory Nut Gorge Region;
- Examines the concentration of natural resource-based recreation using a recent user survey, a demand analysis, and geographic information systems (GIS) mapping;
- Analyzes the demographics of western North Carolina;
- Compares offerings at nearby state parks and other public lands; and
- Identifies the Chimney Rock State Park visitor.



*A variety of activities and range of abilities are taken into account for the needs assessment.*



## REGIONAL NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

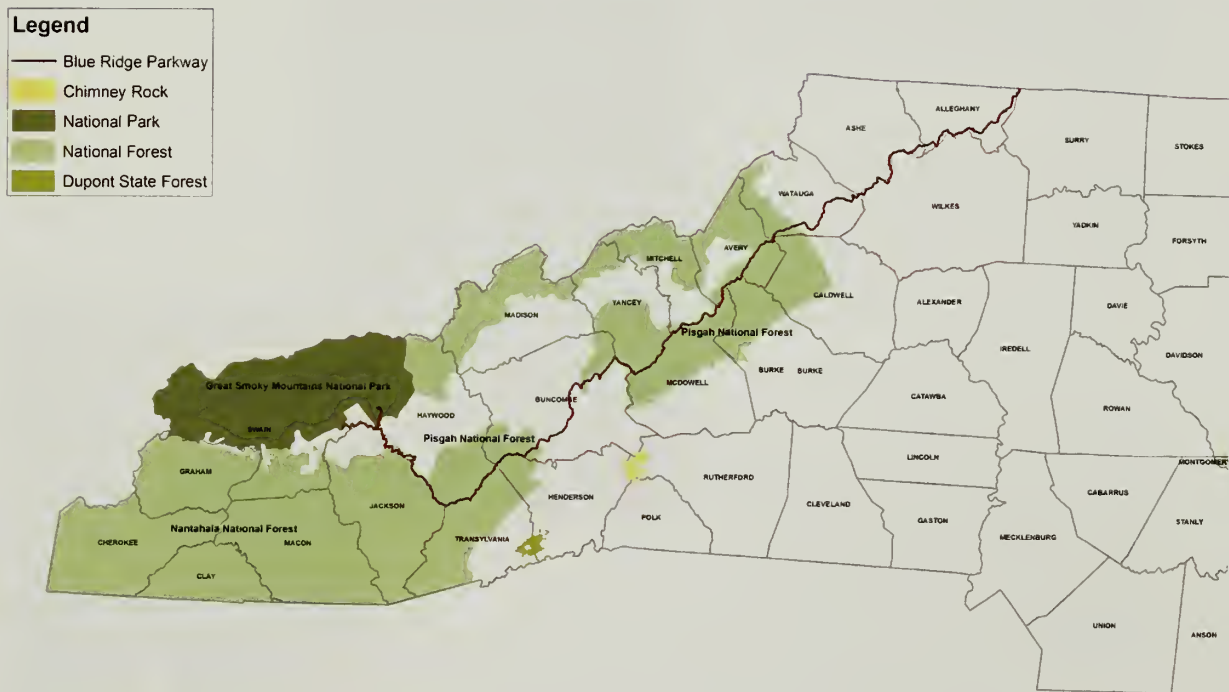
### EXISTING NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION IN THE WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA REGION

The western North Carolina region includes the Appalachian Mountains, Great Smoky Mountains and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Its boundaries are defined by the border shared with Tennessee to the eastern edge of Rutherford, Burke, Caldwell, Wilkes, and Surry counties. Several national protected areas span the region offering a range of nature-based recreational activity and include Pisgah National Forest, Nantahala National Forest, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway (see Figure 4.1). Dupont State Forest is also a regional outdoor recreation destination. Natural resource-based activities for this region include:

- Hiking
- Winter Sports
- Mountain Biking
- Horseback Riding
- Rock Climbing
- Fishing
- Swimming
- Whitewater Rafting
- Paddling
- Camping/Backpacking
- Caving



FIGURE 4.1: NATIONAL PARKS AND FORESTS IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA



Source: NC One Map





## EXISTING NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION IN THE HICKORY NUT GORGE REGION

Hickory Nut Gorge is located between the Blue Ridge and Great Smoky Mountains. The 14-mile long gorge was formed by the Rocky Broad River and encompasses the communities of Lake Lure, Gerton, Bat Cave, and Chimney Rock Village. The region includes the counties of Buncombe, McDowell, Henderson, Rutherford, and Polk and is the location of Chimney Rock State Park. Based on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and local chamber of commerce data, natural resource-based activities for this area include:

- Hiking
- Mountain Biking
- Horseback Riding
- Rock Climbing
- Fishing
- Swimming
- Paddling
- Camping/Backpacking



## CONCENTRATION OF NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION

The concentration of natural resource-based recreation varies across western North Carolina. This is likely due to the presence of the Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest, Blue Ridge Parkway and their recreation opportunities. These forests encompass 1,627 square miles across the western North Carolina region, however there is no access to them from the Hickory Nut Gorge. Between Nantahala and Pisgah National Forest, there are nearly 1,700 miles of hiking, mountain biking, and equestrian trails. In the Hickory Nut Gorge region, hiking trails are limited to the Donald Ross nature trails, Gerton hiking trails, and Chimney Rock State Park hiking trails. Figures 4.2 - 4.11 show the distribution of each nature-based activity for both the western North Carolina region and Hickory Nut Gorge.

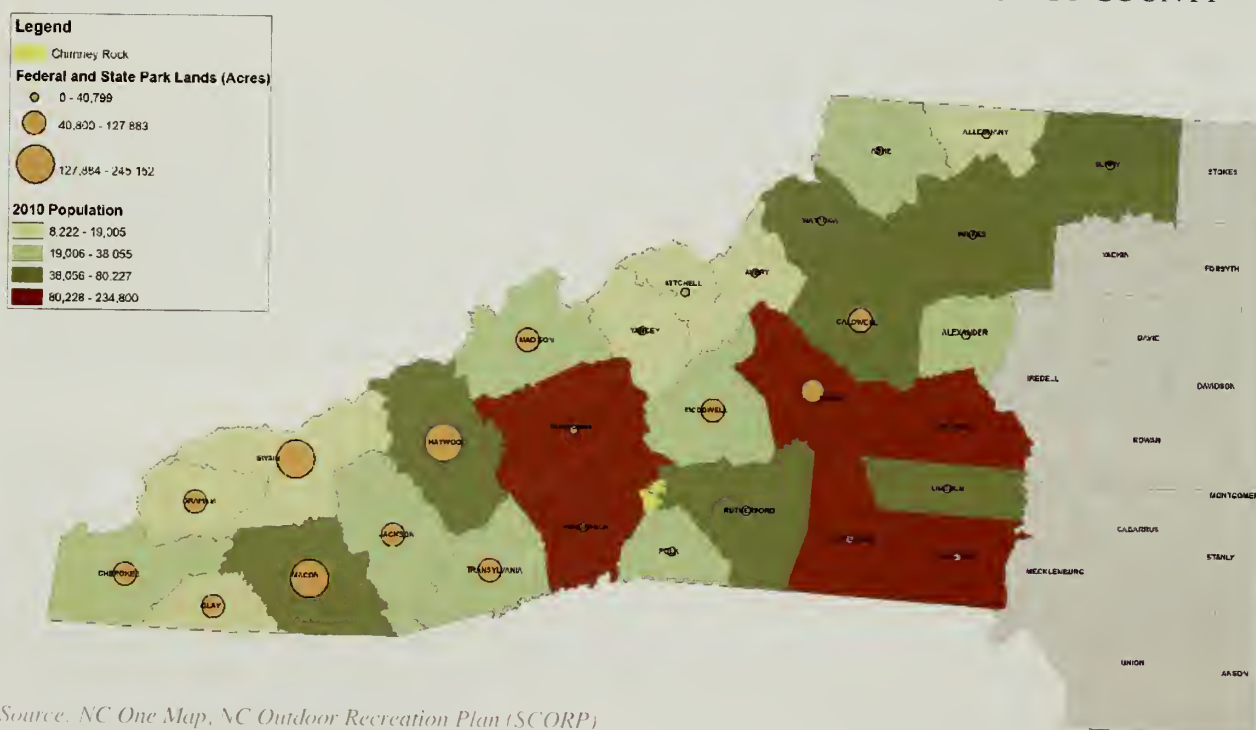
When measured against the entire western North Carolina region, Hickory Nut Gorge is underserved when it comes to access to existing natural resource-based recreation. For example, Figure 4.2 shows miles of hiking trail per person, by county (data obtained from the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2008). When considering trail need broadly across western North Carolina populations, it is evident that trails are needed in the counties adjacent to Chimney Rock State Park. In fact, these counties exhibit some of the highest numbers of residents per mile of hiking trail in the state (see Figure 4.2). Rutherford County experiences the highest ratio in western North Carolina with 62.843 persons per mile of trail, indicating the need for more hiking trails.

FIGURE 4.2: RESIDENTS PER MILE OF HIKING TRAIL BY COUNTY



Source: NC One Map, NC Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

FIGURE 4.3: FEDERAL AND STATE PARK LANDS AND 2010 POPULATION BY COUNTY



Source: NC One Map, NC Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

In Figure 4.3, the gradation from light green to maroon shows increasing population while the increases in circle size represent acreages of federal and state park lands. Adjacent counties to Chimney Rock have relatively low acreages of these parklands when compared to counties west of the study area. Yet, these counties, especially Buncombe and Henderson, have some of the highest populations in western North Carolina. Therefore, additional parklands are required to meet the needs of nearby residents.

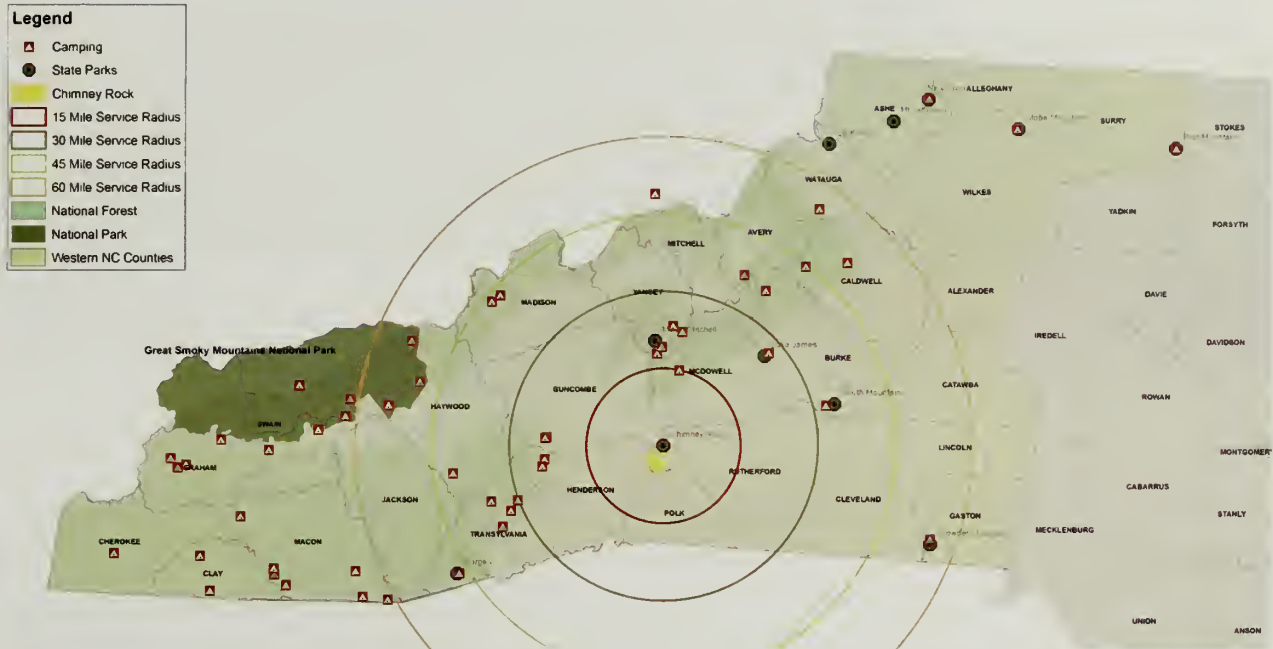




## NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION MAPS

Every year, people visit western North Carolina to experience hiking, mountain biking, and other recreational activities. Examination of user proximity to these activities is important with respect to user groups as well as the development of future state parks facilities. While one user may be willing to make a four-hour round trip in one day to experience a day of hiking, a family with young children likely will not. Using Chimney Rock State Park as a hub, distances of 15, 30, 45, and 60-mile radii were examined. Figures 4.4 - 4.8 show travel distances from the park. By overlaying these service radii, we can begin to understand from a geographic perspective that there are deficiencies in such activities such as camping, hiking, and mountain biking. This information will help to determine the park development program for future state park facilities.

FIGURE 4.4: CHIMNEY ROCK SERVICE RADII - CAMPING AREAS



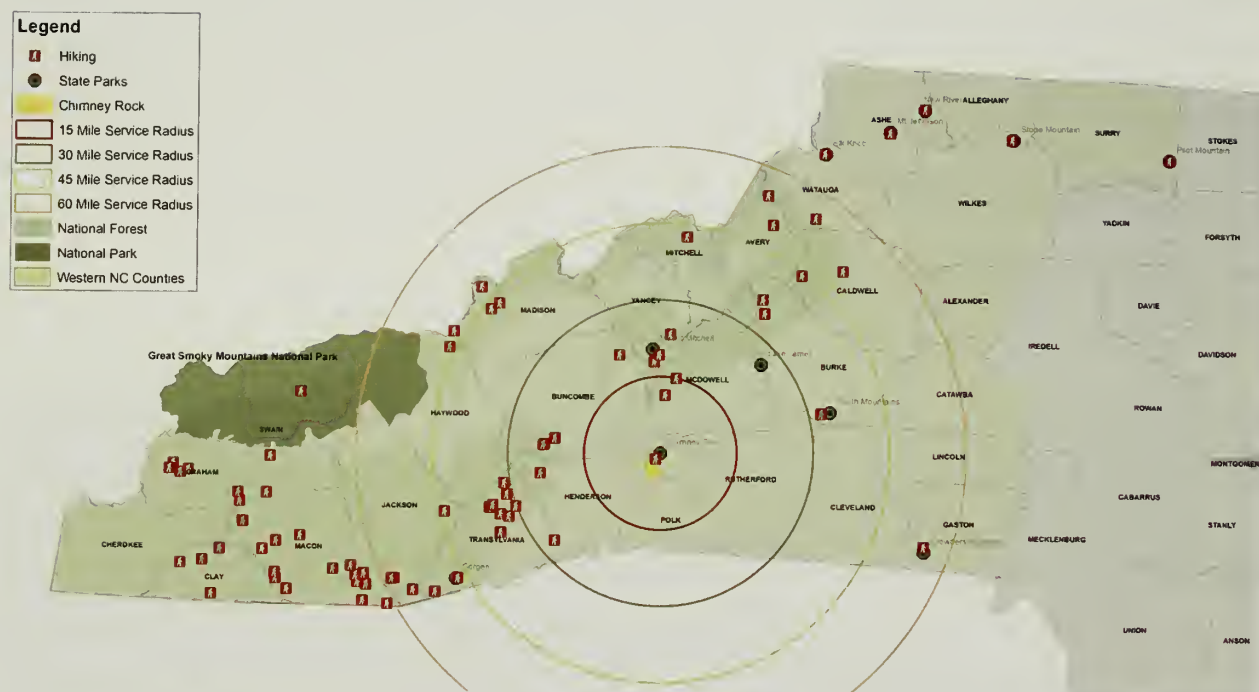
Source: NC One Map, North Carolina Gazetteer (DeLorme), various online sources

FIGURE 4.5: CHIMNEY ROCK SERVICE RADII - EQUESTRIAN TRAILHEADS



Source: NC One Map, North Carolina Gazetteer (DeLorme), various online sources

FIGURE 4.6: CHIMNEY ROCK SERVICE RADII - HIKING TRAILHEADS



Source: NC One Map, North Carolina Gazetteer (DeLorme), various online sources

FIGURE 4.7: CHIMNEY ROCK SERVICE RADII - MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAILHEADS



Source: NC One Map, North Carolina Gazetteer (DeLorme), [www.mtbikewnc.com](http://www.mtbikewnc.com), various online sources



FIGURE 4.8: CHIMNEY ROCK SERVICE RADII - ROCK CLIMBING



Source: NC One Map, North Carolina Gazetteer (DeLorme), Flatlines Southeast Climbing, various online sources

## OTHER WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA STATE PARKS

Examining the park facilities of other western North Carolina state parks helps to assess the demand, use, and success of specific recreational options. This analysis will help guide specific program and facility recommendations for Chimney Rock State Park by 1) determining whether there is a lack of facilities in surrounding parks, and 2) understanding the successes and/or failures of specific facilities that may translate to Chimney Rock State Park. Table 4.1 and Figure 4.9 display the location and activities of other western North Carolina state parks.

TABLE 4.1: PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES AT OTHER STATE PARKS IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

State Park	Distance from Chimney Rock	Env. Education	Overnight Facilities	Hiking	Mountain Biking	Equestrian
SOUTH MOUNTAINS	70 mi.	Yes	Camping	Yes	Yes	Yes
GORGES	60 mi.	Yes	Camping	Yes	Yes	Yes
LAKE JAMES	30 mi.	Yes	Camping	Yes	No	No
MOUNT MITCHELL	23 mi.	Yes	Camping	Yes	No	No

FIGURE 4.9: STATE PARKS IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

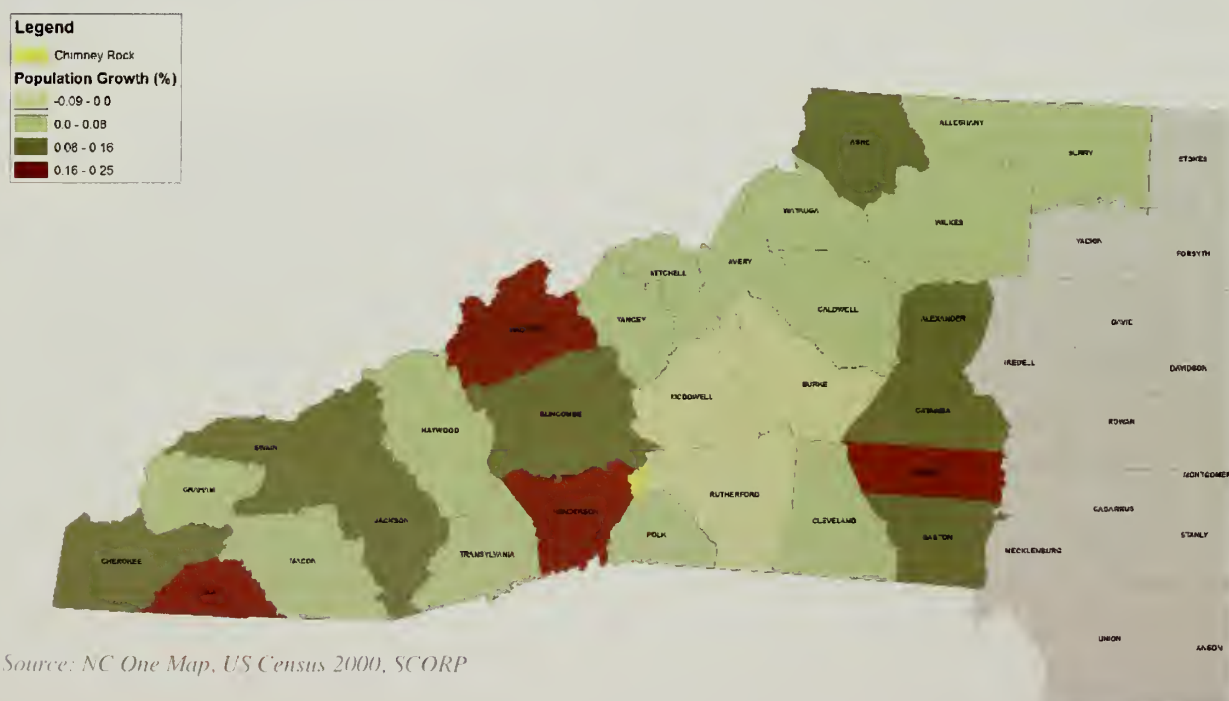


Source: NC One Map

## DEMOGRAPHICS OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

When recommending a park implementation program, demographics and population trends are important to consider, especially from a regional perspective. These trends help to inform park planners about the potential recreational needs of a changing population. Population growth has been significant in Henderson and Buncombe counties over the past 10 years (see Figure 4.10). It will therefore be important to understand the recreational needs of the existing and growing population (see Figure 4.15).

FIGURE 4.10: POPULATION GROWTH MAP (2000-2010)

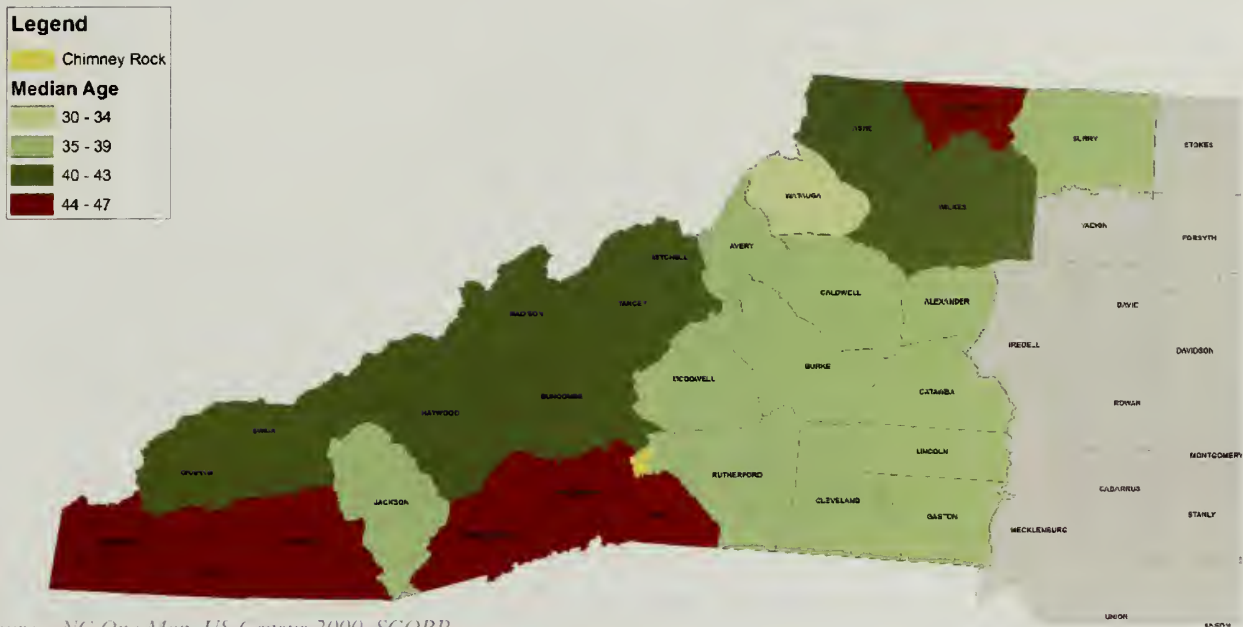


Source: NC One Map, US Census 2000, SCORP



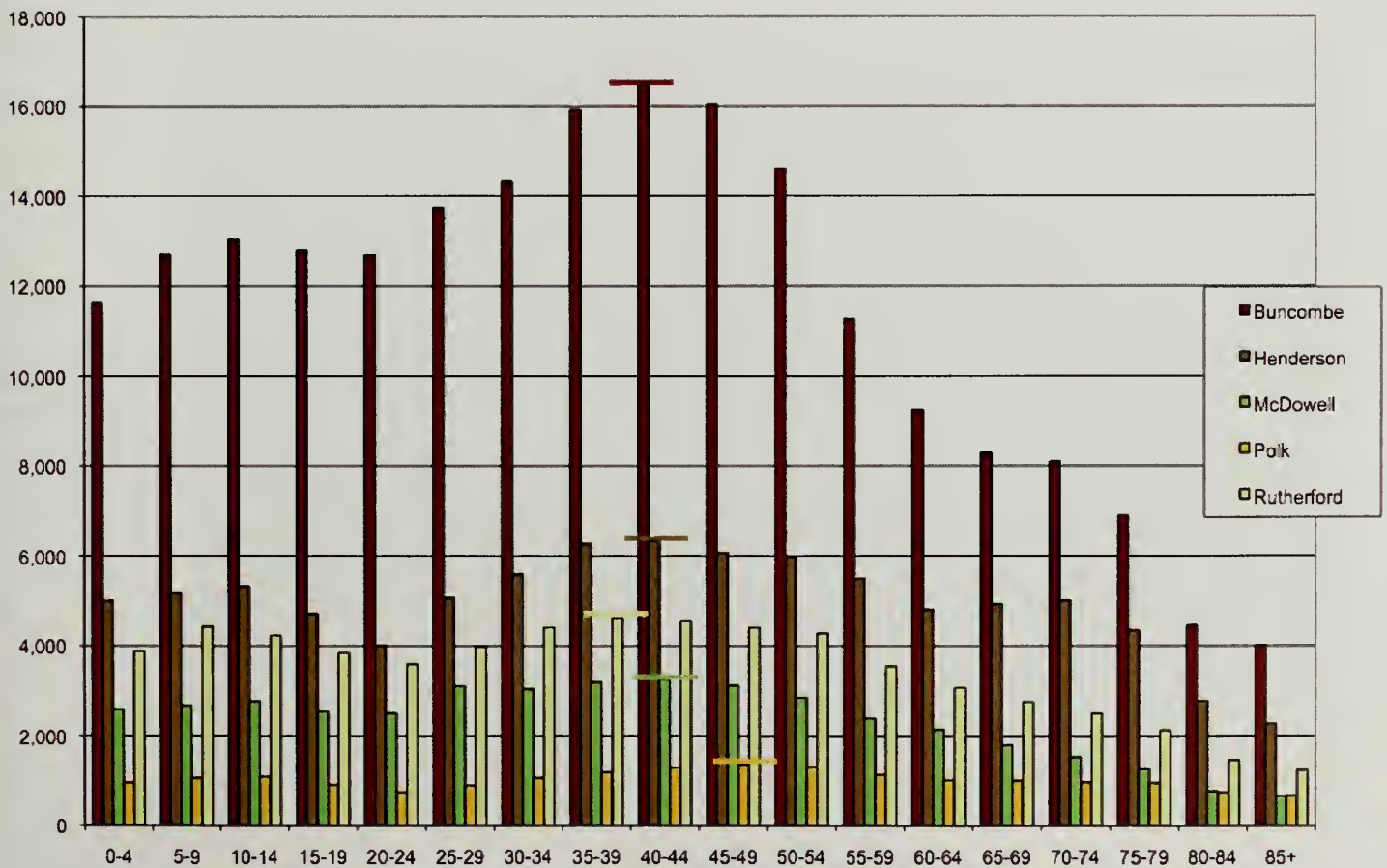
Interestingly, Chimney Rock State Park borders four counties that show quite a range of median age for western North Carolina (Figure 4.11). For example, Rutherford County has a median age of 38 while Polk County has a median age of 45. Because of this local range, it will be important to meet the recreational needs of both younger and older populations (see Figures 4.12 - 4.14).

FIGURE 4.11: MEDIAN AGE MAP (2000)



Source: NC One Map, US Census 2000, SCORP

FIGURE 4.12: AGE GROUP DISTRIBUTION (2000) Chimney Rock Surrounding Counties



Source: US Census 2000

FIGURE 4.13: PERCENTAGE INCREASE BY AGE GROUP (1990 TO 2000) *Western North Carolina*

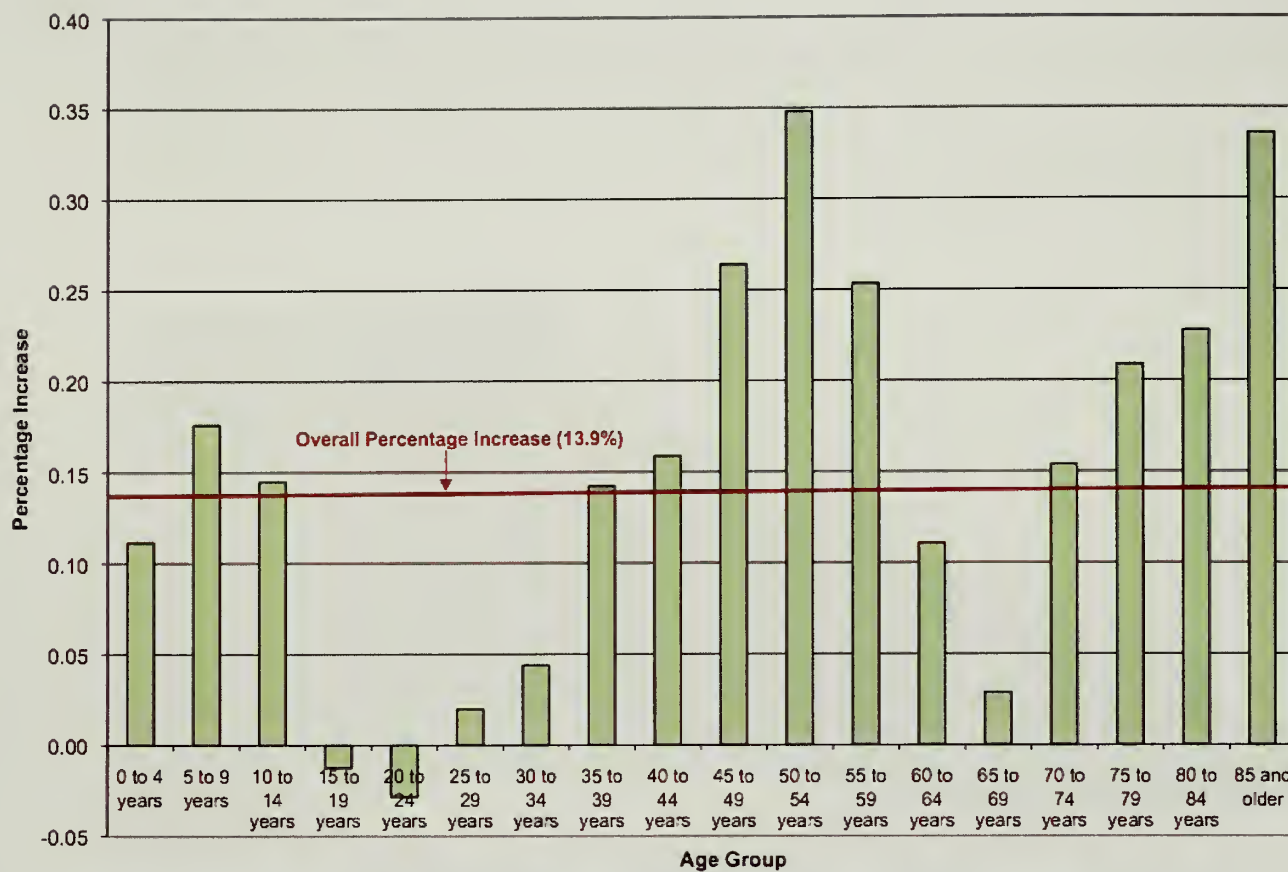


FIGURE 4.14: PERCENTAGE INCREASE BY AGE GROUP (1990 TO 2000) *Chimney Rock Surrounding Counties*

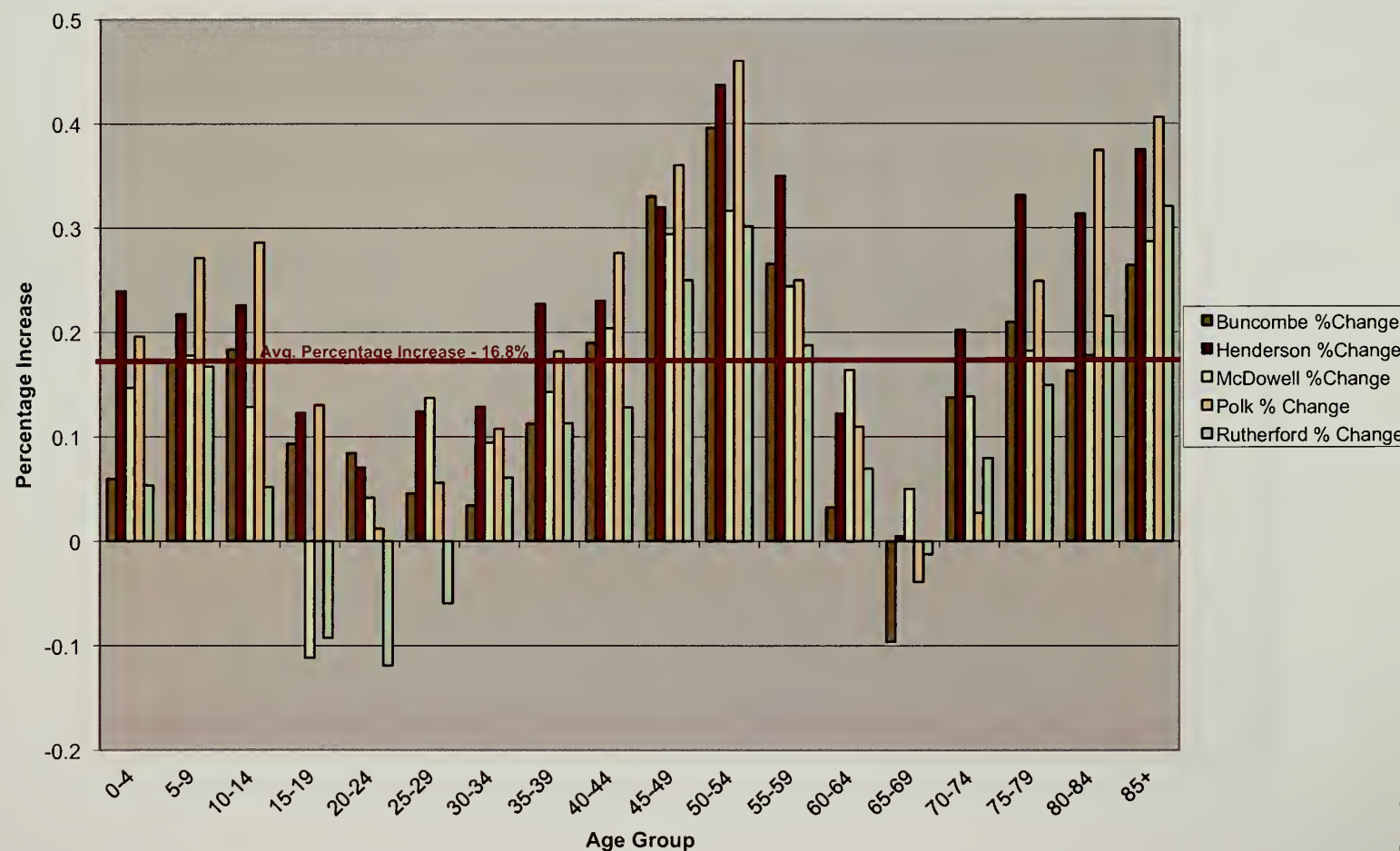






FIGURE 4.15: POPULATION DENSITY 2000 MAP



Source: NC One Map, US Census 2000

## IDENTIFYING THE PARK VISITOR

Chimney Rock State Park had 210,720 visitors in 2009 and 214,728 visitors in 2010. Among these visitors, the following park user groups were identified.

### WORKING FAMILIES AND YEAR-ROUND RESIDENTS

This group includes families with children, individuals, couples and other household types where the inhabitants generally reside in the community year-round. Most are employed in or around the area.

- Picnicking
- Hiking (moderate, moderate distance, loops)
- Interpretive area(s) with programs
- Horseback riding
- Views, vistas and wildlife
- Fishing, paddling
- Tent site camping





## RETIRED YEAR-ROUND RESIDENTS

Retirees include couples, individuals, and other household types where the inhabitants are older than 50 years, not working or working part-time and generally reside in the community year-round. This generally includes “active” retirees in the 50 years old to 75 years old group. In some instances these households may have visiting children, grand children or others who might use recreational facilities. Most have a sustainable source of income from pensions, social security, and savings sources.

- Picnicking
- Hiking (easy, short distance, loops)
- Interpretive area(s) with programs
- Views, vistas and wildlife
- Fishing



## TEMPORARY RESIDENTS (RESIDENTIAL VISITORS)

This group includes second and vacation homeowners and those that rent these properties on a seasonal or shorter-term basis. This segment includes a full range of age groups and interests including individuals, families with children, groups of friends and couples.

- Hiking (moderate to difficult, extended mileage, out-and-back)
- Mountain biking
- Rock climbing
- Horseback riding
- Views, vistas and wildlife
- Fishing, paddling
- Backpacking
- Primitive camping



## VISITORS (TOURISTS)

The tourist segment includes visitors to the area for short durations ranging from a few hours or less to several days. This group may be just driving through, staying in local hotels, or camping. This segment also includes a full range of age groups and interests including individuals, families with children, groups of friends and couples.

- Hiking (all levels)
- Mountain biking
- Rock climbing
- Horseback Riding
- Views, vista and wildlife
- Fishing and paddling
- Backpacking
- Primitive Camping
- Picnicking
- Interpretive areas with programs



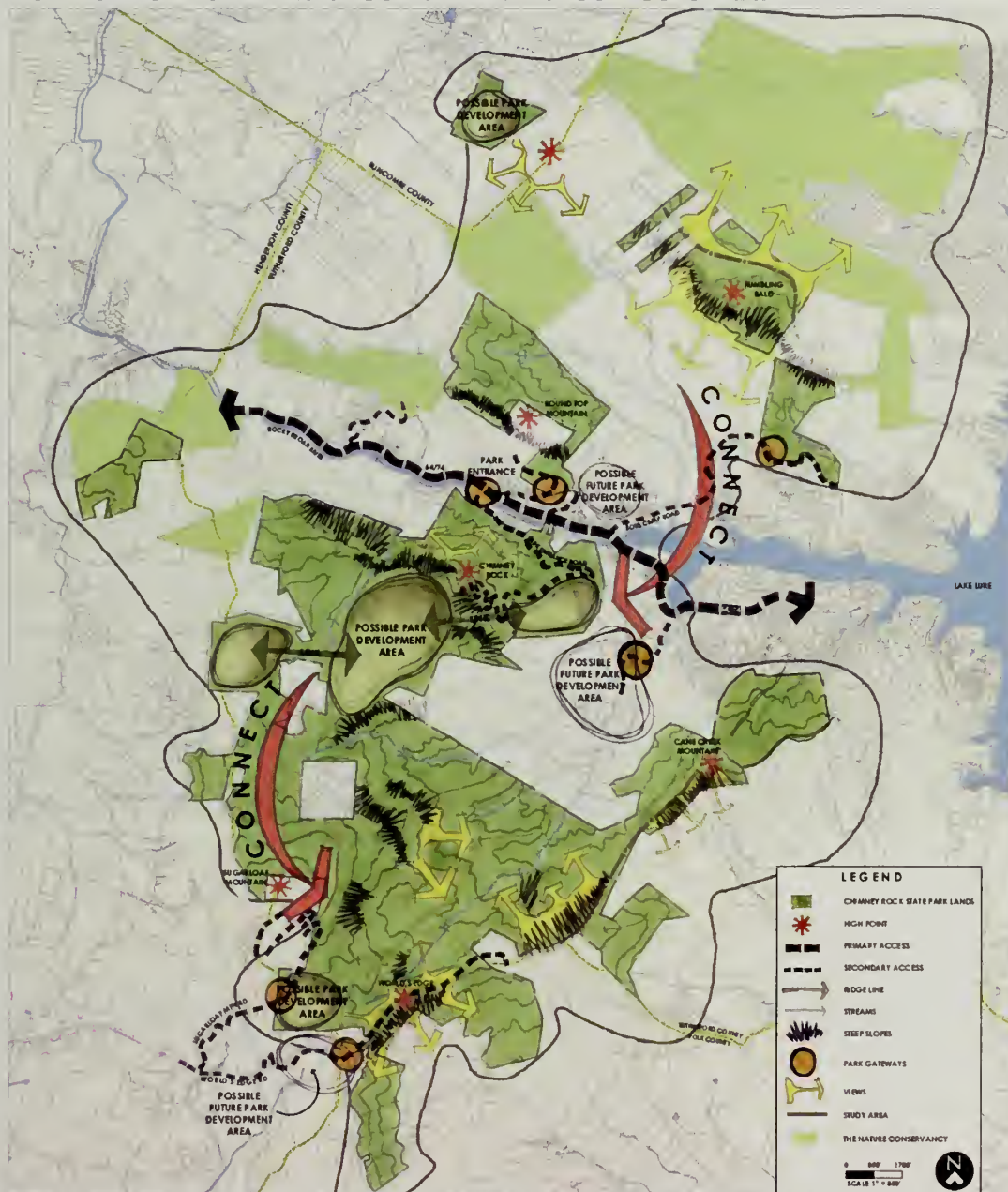


# 5 OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS FOR FUTURE PARK DEVELOPMENT

## OVERVIEW

Chimney Rock State Park is already recognized as a premier natural destination in western North Carolina. The recent acquisition of additional parklands by the state creates an abundance of opportunities to conserve additional ecological regions within Hickory Nut Gorge as well as provide increased recreational opportunities for park visitors. Early in the planning process, a graphic study was prepared showing potential opportunities and constraints for development in the Chimney Rock State Park study area (Figure 5.1).

FIGURE 5.1: OPPORTUNITIES & CONSTRAINTS CONCEPT MAP



## GENERAL OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

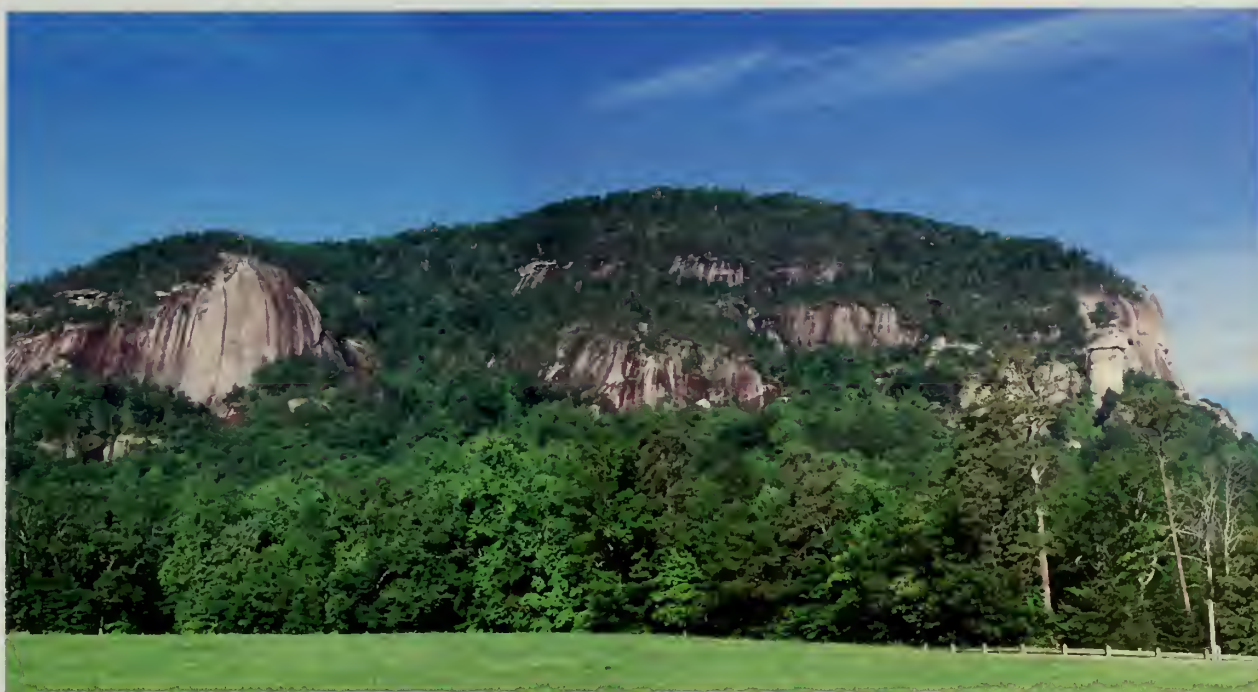
Chimney Rock State Park's distinct beauty and expanse of open space is due largely to its geomorphology. Steep rock cliffs, several large summits, and the varying terrain offer outstanding vistas and a broad spectrum of natural features for exploration. This range of site features provides the opportunity for future park users to design their own park experience. Existing roadways such as Boys Camp Road and World's Edge Road provide opportunities for park gateways and access points.

While opportunities are numerous, constraints must be considered as part of a thorough examination. Constraints affect implementation, feasibility of construction, park development and operation, and cost. The dramatic landscape of Chimney Rock State Park offers very limited areas for future park facility development. Among the 4,531 acres of parklands, less than 100 total acres are flat enough to accommodate park facilities. Steep topography and hydrology patterns restrict structures, roadways, and day use areas. Access is a substantial constraint to park circulation, operations, and connectivity. U.S. Route 64/74A, the Rocky Broad River, and the existing terrain are the main factors that limit connectivity between the north and south study area of the parklands. Travel times to the north and south of the park from central Chimney Rock along existing roadways can take up to 45 minutes. In addition, for all proposed facilities, a low impact development program will be necessary in order to maintain the ecology across the study area. The region has a valuable concentration of rare plant and animal species. The significant natural heritage areas that are present in the park today have the potential to thrive for generations, and the success of their protection presents constraints to park development areas. Adjacent private properties also constrain park expansion and future development. Landowner and resident privacy will need to be considered and respected when planning for public facilities and access. Park roadways and trails will need to be planned away from existing neighborhoods, homes and other private lands. Finally, steps will need to be taken to address the existing jeep trails and unpaved corridors in the park, which are considered unusable due to erosion and overuse. Rehabilitating these facilities will take time and introduce potential unanticipated costs during park development.

### CENTRAL CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

Central Chimney Rock State Park includes the Attraction, Chimney Rock Mountain, Chimney Rock Village, Town of Lake Lure, and Bottomless Pools. There are several development opportunities in central Chimney Rock State Park. The park entrance road off U.S. Route 64/74A provides existing public access to the Attraction. At the Meadows, opportunities exist for an egress roadway as well as visitor facilities in the large flat open area. Proctor Road offers an additional access point off U.S. Route 64/74A, making an alternative entrance road a possibility.





*The Meadows in the foreground, with Chimney Rock in the background.*



*A view of Lake Lure from the Opera Box at Chimney Rock; Rumbling Bald slopes upward, left of the lake.*

Although views of Lake Lure and Chimney Rock Village are breathtaking, the landscape that surrounds them constrains any expansion opportunities in and around the Attraction. Steep rock cliffs and valleys limit any additional roadway connections to U.S. Route 64/74A. Stream patterns and Hickory Nut Falls are sensitive areas that also constrain development.



## SOUTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

World's Edge and Cane Creek Mountain comprise southern Chimney Rock State Park and contain some of the park's most unique views of the southern gorge. This area is more remote and offers significant natural features not found in other parts of the park, such as large mountain streams and extended north/south ridgelines. Despite the remote location, two potential gateways would offer public access at World's Edge Road and Sugarloaf Mountain Road. South of Sugarloaf Mountain, a large flat area off Sugarloaf Mountain Road serves as an opportunity for future park development.

Public access to southern Chimney Rock State Park is available; however travel times to these roadways from the park entrance can take up to an hour. This extended trip time is a constraint for park operations and visitor access. There are no additional paved roadways within the park boundary, and existing jeep trails are considered unusable due to severe erosion problems. Several farms and homesteads are adjacent to park property, and all roadways, public facilities, and signage will require cooperation with private landowners. Therefore, this area lends itself to limited development opportunities within a remote landscape.



*World's Edge*





## NORTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

Northern Chimney Rock State Park includes Rumbling Bald Mountain, among other natural features. Northern Chimney Rock State Park has the potential for a backcountry visitor experience, and would be ideal for those seeking more solitude than is found in other areas of the park. Rare opportunities to view the north side of Rumbling Bald exist at Eagle Rock and Shumont Mountain. Boys Camp Road, a collector road off U.S. Route 64/74A, is an opportunity to provide access between the entrance road to the park and northern Chimney Rock State Park. Several possible park development areas south of Rumbling Bald and west near Shumont Mountain are flat and adjacent to existing roadways. Trail development in northern Chimney Rock State Park will be challenging, as the jeep trail along the ridgeline of Rumbling Bald Mountain is not feasible for a future hiking trail.

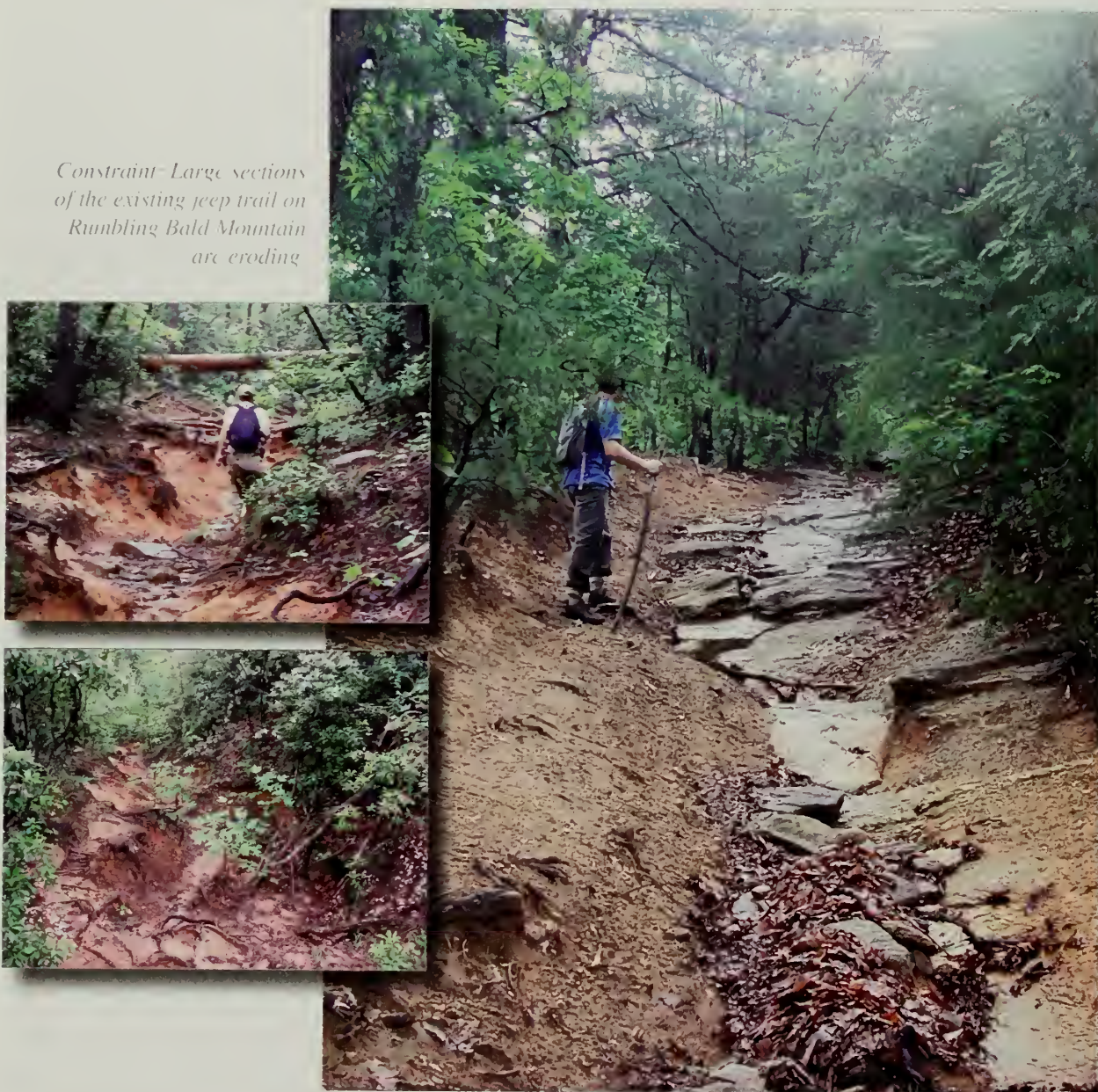


*A view of Lake Lure from Rumbling Bald Mountain.*



The Rocky Broad River and U.S. Route 64/74A bisect the northern park, creating a significant disconnect between the southern and central park. This is a constraint for potential park facilities in the southwest area near Round Top Mountain. The steep cliff faces and highly sensitive natural features limit park facility development. Access is limited to Boys Camp Road and Shumont Road, with travel times ranging between 30 to 60 minutes from the entrance to Chimney Rock State Park. Another constraint to future northern park facilities is the adjacent land use. Single-family lots and private property border the park boundary, and careful planning will be necessary to segregate private and public facilities. Signs of trespassing and unauthorized hiking, climbing and parking are evident near Eagle Rock and at the eastern, northern, and southern part of Rumbling Bald. Additionally, a substantial amount of erosion is occurring along several of the existing jeep trails, affecting access and recreation in this section of the park.

*Constraint—Large sections of the existing jeep trail on Rumbling Bald Mountain are eroding*







# 6 PARK PURPOSE

## VISION

Chimney Rock State Park will be a destination that enhances the stewardship and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources; a place that provides a range of nature-based recreation experiences consistent with the ecological character and scenic beauty of Hickory Nut Gorge; and a place that supports interpretive programs that educate visitors about the park's unique flora and fauna, distinct geology, sensitive and endangered species, and land conservation and stewardship practices.

## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

**GOAL:** *Develop a conservation and resource management program that prioritizes sensitive natural heritage areas and outlines a comprehensive land conservation strategy for existing and future parkland.*

### OBJECTIVES:

1. Establish a phasing plan for future park use that will guide future park development programs.
2. Identify natural communities within the park, and determine best management methods for protection.
3. Abandon all unsustainable roads and trails and take appropriate measures to prevent further resource degradation.
4. Protect and monitor designated species within the park. Continue mapping of rare species using global positioning systems (GPS) technology.
5. Establish a program to map, prioritize, and treat invasive species throughout the park. Collaborate with private land owners where feasible.





**GOAL:** *Provide a variety of high quality, sustainable, natural resource-based outdoor recreation opportunities to meet the diverse needs of park visitors.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide a park trail network among natural resources and features that provides a cross section of hiking experiences.
2. Develop improved facilities for picnicking within park core for groups and families.
3. Identify opportunities for camping experiences within the park.
4. Manage rock climbing in appropriate areas.
5. Explore the feasibility of providing equestrian and mountain biking trail opportunities where appropriate.



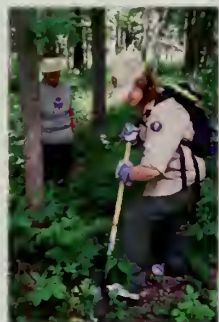




**GOAL:** *Expand interpretive opportunities through the establishment of Chimney Rock State Park educational programs and the development of new use areas and facilities.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide opportunities for learning about park natural and cultural resources through static interpretive displays, park contact stations, educational materials, on- and off-site interpretive programs, and guided tours where .
2. Continue to develop and initiate self-guided interpretive trails.



**GOAL:** *Centralize park facilities to improve access and improve operational efficiency between park facilities, day use areas, and management.*

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Provide universally accessible public facilities.
2. Concentrate limited development footprint of visitor's center and other park offices.
3. Limit day use facilities outside of park core for increased operational efficiency.



*Hickory Nut Falls*

**GOAL:** Explore the feasibility of establishing a network of regional trails that connects park and other public areas within the Hickory Nut Gorge, thereby strengthening the local economy and enhancing community amenities.

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. Collaborate on a trails network that links Chimney Rock State Park throughout Hickory Nut Gorge.
2. Connect visitors to the park by providing public trail connections to park facilities and day use areas, the Town of Lake Lure, and Chimney Rock Village.



1 Lake Lure Town Greenway

2 Hikers taking in the view of Hickory Nut Gorge

3 Chimney Rock Village



# 7 PARK DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

## OVERVIEW

Meeting the goals of the Chimney Rock State Park master plan will require a park development program that integrates the existing conditions inventory and analysis, needs assessment, park opportunities and constraints, and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation mission statement. A strong park program will provide the foundation for current and future phases of park development. For the purposes of this master plan, the Chimney Rock State Park Development Program falls into three categories: Conservation Management Areas; Education and Stewardship Areas; and Access and Recreation Areas.

It is important to note that proposed park development program areas are not mutually exclusive from one another. Alternatively, all of the programs will overlap each other to some extent. By determining where conservation, education, and recreation can occur within the park early in the planning process, the programs can and will compliment one another.

## CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT AREAS

Where there is a high concentration of rare species and wildlife habitats as well as significant natural features, a conservation management area is introduced to promote the protection of these sensitive areas. Significant natural heritage area (SNHA) data was examined in combination with other geographic information systems (GIS) data, such as biodiversity and wildlife habitat assessment mapping. Fieldwork and inventory of existing facilities was also considered to determine the best locations for conservation. Because of the sensitive ecology in conservation management areas, public access should be very limited to prioritize natural resource conservation. Trails may traverse some parts of the conservation management areas but no trails will begin or end within these boundaries. Any proposed ancillary features will be planned a substantial distance from the protection areas.



*GPS/GIS mapping*



*Removing invasive plants*



*Identifying rare species*

Conservation management techniques will vary in scale depending on the occurrence of natural communities in each area of the park. Managing landscape connections between significant natural heritage areas will strengthen habitat as well as extend ecological viability for species such as black bear and predatory birds. The landscape connections buffer ecological corridors for species that require large areas for breeding and foraging. These large, unfragmented areas also offer local benefits to smaller species. If managed well, natural resources will thrive and regenerate. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation should continue to work closely with conservation partners, such as The Nature Conservancy, Carolina Mountains Land Conservancy, and Foothills Conservancy to ensure the protection of these landscape connections.

The most notable locations for conservation management in the park are areas south of Shumont Mountain, west of Rumbling Bald, and near Round Top Mountain. In the southern park, conservation management areas include areas around Bat Cave, Stony Mountain, and lands north of World's Edge, east of Sugarloaf Mountain, and west of Cane Creek Mountain.

## EDUCATION AND STEWARDSHIP AREAS

Part of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation's mission is to promote stewardship and provide environmental education opportunities to visitors. Within Chimney Rock State Park, education and stewardship areas will incorporate passive recreation limited to picnicking, easy to moderate guided hiking, and environmental education. These areas may also be accessed by permit or with the guidance of N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation staff, due to their remote location and sensitive surroundings. Rotating programs, established by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, would be seasonal and potentially offered to local schools or other interested groups.



*Students in an environmental education class*





Some areas in the park could be utilized for education and stewardship programs. Examination of significant natural heritage area data indicates that rare species' habitat is occurring all across the study area. However, certain areas are less concentrated, and therefore may be more appropriate for permitted or a guided access facility. Some areas on the north side of Rumbling Bald may be capable of supporting limited hiking. In south Chimney Rock State Park, the Cane Creek Mountain area may also be able to support limited low impact facilities. Because no parking or toilet facilities will be available in the education and stewardship areas, using adjacent access and recreation areas will be necessary.

## ACCESS AND RECREATION AREAS

Close examination of park opportunities and constraints indicate that certain areas of the park are better candidates for public access, due to existing roadways and other amenities. Because Chimney Rock State Park will incorporate low impact and sustainable design principles for park development, considering existing facilities for future use is advantageous and cost effective. Typical access and recreation areas will include vehicle parking, toilet buildings, and visitor ancillary features, such as kiosks and water fountains. These areas include varying levels of passive and active recreation opportunities, depending on the presence of rare plant and animal species, existing roadways, and travel distance from proposed park facilities.

Access and recreation areas are proposed in central, south and north Chimney Rock State Park. This includes the Attraction, Bottomless Pools, World's Edge, and Rumbling Bald. Activities will range from picnicking, easy to difficult hiking, environmental education, and backpack camping (in more remote areas).



*Hickory Nut Falls*

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# 8 PROPOSED PARK ALTERNATIVES

## INTRODUCTION

Three different park development concepts were prepared and presented to the citizens of North Carolina through a public open house and internet-based online comment form. The Chimney Rock State Park public comment form was designed to solicit input on a series of questions relevant to park visitation, programming, and planning. Although not a statistically-valid survey, the comment form was an important tool in the planning process, enabling the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation to understand important concerns and desires of future park users. It was distributed in hardcopy format to participants at the public open house meeting in May 2010 and was made more broadly available online from late May through June of 2010. A total of 586 responses were recorded. The results of each question are featured in detail in Appendix A. The key results of the online comment form include:

- A strong desire for increased hiking, camping, mountain biking, and rock climbing opportunities in Chimney Rock State Park
- A preference for a park master plan that incorporates recreation and development that has a low-impact on the environment, with a focus on conservation
- Request for public access to closed trails
- A need for conservation and protection of significant natural resources
- An interest in more day use areas and increased public access areas

## MAY 2010 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP

On May 26, 2010, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation conducted a public planning session at Lake Lure Town Hall. Citizens were invited to view and comment on three proposed design alternatives for Chimney Rock State Park, ask questions to N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation staff and the project consultant, and share ideas regarding the future of the state park.



*Park staff, project consultants, and the general public discussed each of the alternatives at a planning workshop, and hundreds of people provided input online (see Appendix A for all public comments).*



The May workshop was a drop-in style meeting that took place from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. Display boards were set up illustrating regional context, park programming, and inventory/analysis maps of the project study area. A regional trails map and typical park facilities board was also made available. Three map stations contained the proposed design alternatives, where participants were given the opportunity to submit written comments (each alternative is shown and described on the following pages). Workshop participants were asked to complete a comment form that contained specific questions relevant to the project. Questions such as park visitation frequency, recreational interests, and future park facilities were included on the comment form. A total of 157 participants signed the attendance registration sheet. All comments from this workshop are included in Appendix A.

Immediately following the workshop for a period of four weeks, a project resources webpage and the online comment form were made available to provide an opportunity for continued public input. The project resources webpage included links to all workshop materials and informational boards for downloading and viewing, as well as a link to the online comment form.

## PARK DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES PRESENTED AT THE WORKSHOP

The three alternatives presented at the May 2010 open house workshop are described on the following pages. Under all three alternatives, improvements would be made to existing facilities, infrastructure and trails at the former Chimney Rock Park tourist destination. These repairs and renovations to modernize the facilities should improve safety and the visitor experience. Existing substandard and unsustainable trails in backcountry areas of all park properties would be abandoned and revegetated where feasible. The three alternatives include:

- Alternative #1: Conservation-Focused Park
- Alternative #2: Low Impact Recreation
- Alternative #3: Intensive Recreation and Use

### ALTERNATIVE #1: CONSERVATION-FOCUSED PARK

Protection and stewardship of Significant Natural Heritage Areas is the guiding philosophy for the Conservation-Focused Park alternative (Figure 8.1). Significant Natural Heritage Areas comprise eight different areas of the Chimney Rock State Park study area and are shown in this concept as conservation management areas. Each conservation management area would incorporate methods for natural species protection, including ecosystem and landscape-scale stewardship with minimal human disturbance. Under this scenario, public access within the conservation management areas would be limited to prioritize natural resource conservation over general outdoor recreation.

The Conservation-Focused Park alternative would use the existing park entrance and entry road. Under this scenario, development of new and additional park facilities would be minimized in accordance with the conservation-based design concept. A visitor center is proposed across from the Lake Lure Town Hall, and would be connected to the community via the Lake Lure Greenway. Two day use areas are proposed, one at Bottomless Pools and the other near Shumont Mountain. Several proposed hiking trails occur in the northern, central, and southern part of Chimney Rock State Park. The first would extend from Exclamation Point to the top of Chimney Rock Mountain and loop around the Orchards. The other trail would begin at the Shumont Mountain day use area and extend along the Rumbling Bald ridge, with an out-and-back option or a loop around the north side of Rumbling Bald. Approximately 10 miles of proposed hiking trails are included within this concept.



FIGURE 8.1: ALTERNATIVE # 1: CONSERVATION-FOCUSED PARK



## ALTERNATIVE # 2: LOW IMPACT RECREATION

The Low Impact Recreation alternative (Figure 8.2) proposes the use of existing disturbed areas for future park development activity. Taking advantage of areas that are cleared, flat, or previously developed minimizes environmental impact and creates opportunity for lower cost and more environmentally sensitive park expansion and development. The Low Impact Recreation alternative would transform the existing entrance road into a one-way ingress road that leads to a proposed visitor center at the Meadows. From the Meadows, a new two-way road is proposed that would extend to Proctor Road in Lake Lure. The visitor center at the Meadows would incorporate parking for approximately 300 cars and use permeable paving solutions. Park administrative offices are proposed at the Meadows and the entrance gate would be relocated further into the park so that the Chimney Rock State Park visitor center could be accessed without going through the fee station.

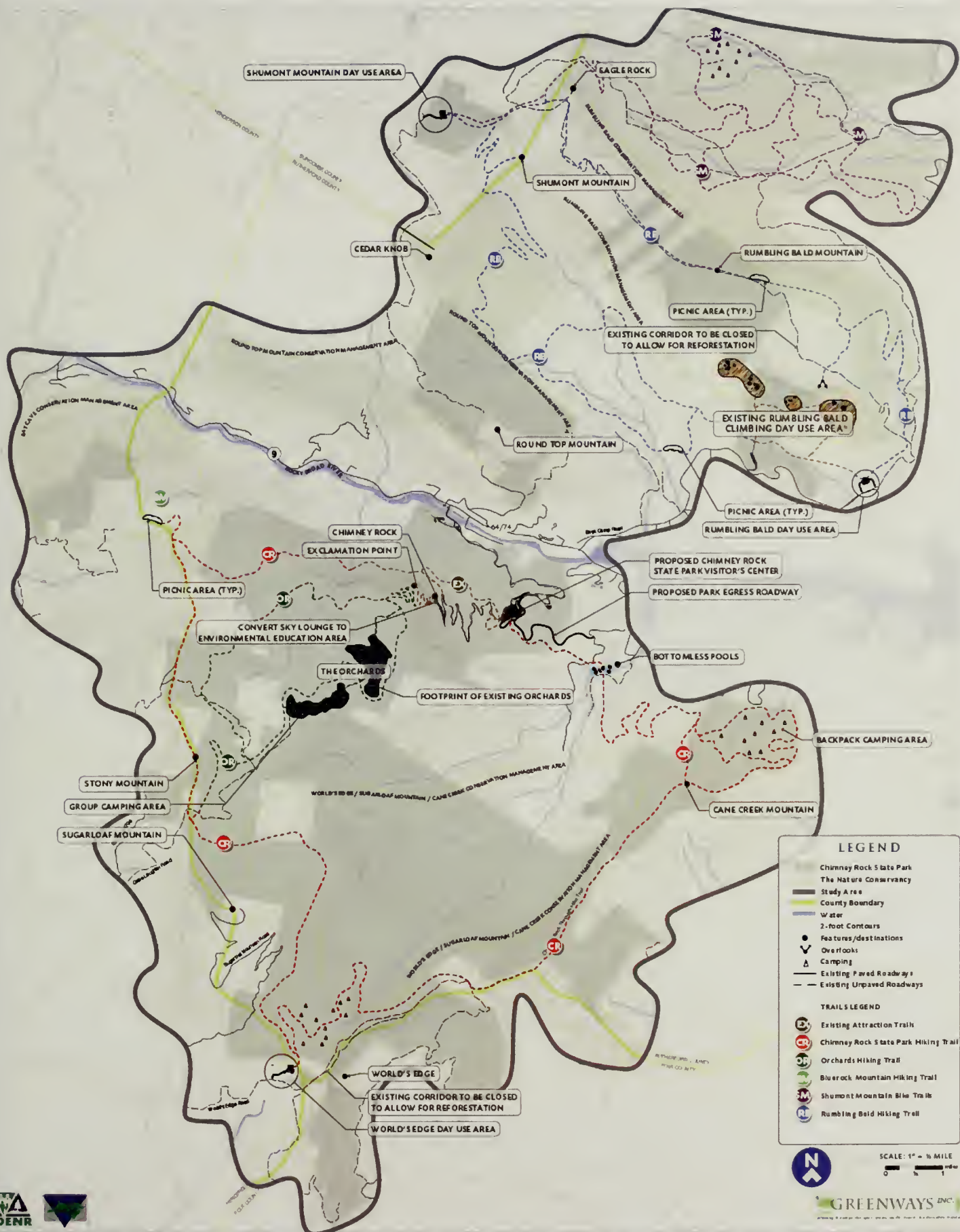
The proposed visitor center at the Meadows would become a recreational hiking hub for Chimney Rock State Park, and an extensive network of trails would be accessible from this area that lead to Chimney Rock, the Orchards, World's Edge, Cane Creek Mountain, and other destinations in the central and southern part of the park. The trail network would also include an extended hiking option with camping and day use areas strategically located so that hikers of all skill levels could hike at their own pace.

Day use areas are proposed at World's Edge, near Shumont Mountain, and near Rumbling Bald. The proposed Rumbling Bald day use area would be an expansion of the existing day use area that would accommodate more visitors and provide an increase in the variety of recreational uses. The area of Chimney Rock State Park that encompasses Rumbling Bald, Shumont Mountain, Eagle Rock, and Round Top Mountain would become a more remote visitor experience, with limited park facilities and access to more strenuous hiking, mountain biking, and rock climbing.





FIGURE 8.2: ALTERNATIVE # 2: LOW IMPACT RECREATION



### ALTERNATIVE # 3: INTENSIVE RECREATION AND USE

The Intensive Recreation and Use alternative (Figure 8.3) proposes park facilities at multiple access points throughout the study area, and would provide the user with various day use locations, overnight camping, and recreation opportunities for all people regardless of their ability. A visitor center is proposed for development at the top of Chimney Rock Mountain, in an area known as the Orchards, an abandoned 25-acre apple orchard. The new visitor center would be a large hub for nature-based recreation within the central and southern parts of Chimney Rock State Park with access to tent-and-trailer camping, picnicking, and hiking.

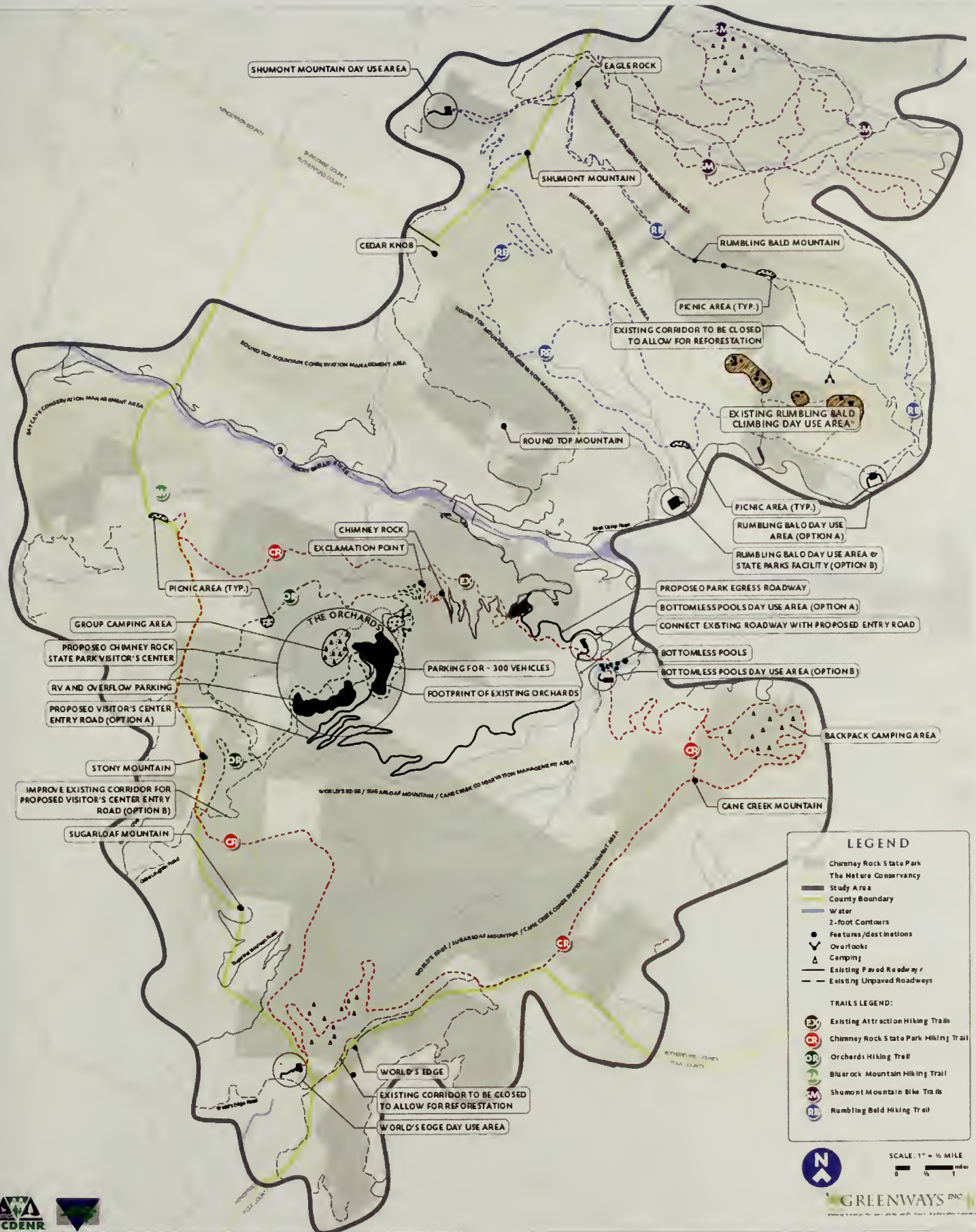
Vehicular access to the Orchards is challenging with respect to the mountainous terrain. Two options for an entry road to the Orchards have been identified for this alternative. The first option is a new roadway that ties to Proctor Road in Lake Lure. This new roadway would extend along the west side of Chimney Rock Mountain. Due to steep topography, the road would be extremely costly and likely cause an adverse environmental impact. A second roadway option would extend from Sugarloaf Mountain Road to the Orchards. This option would use an existing road corridor, reducing both the road cost and environmental impact of first road option described above. However, a proposed park entrance via Sugarloaf Mountain Road would require a longer drive to the Orchards than the proposed road extension from Proctor Road in Lake Lure.

In addition to the visitor center at the Orchards, a day use area is proposed at World's Edge and at Bottomless Pools. The Bottomless Pools day use areas has two options. The first option would be to renovate the existing facility. The second option would be to provide access via trails to Bottomless Pools, and locate visitor facilities elsewhere nearby in order to mitigate congestion during peak use.

A second park facility and small-scale visitor center is proposed near Rumbling Bald. This facility could serve as a potential satellite park administration office and day use area for the northern part of Chimney Rock State Park. Smaller day use areas with public toilets and parking would be located near the Rumbling Bald Climbing Day Use Area and near Shumont Mountain. These day use areas would become gateways for mountain biking, equestrian, rock climbing, and hiking. Other activities proposed in the northern part of the park include picnicking, camping and guided hiking tours.



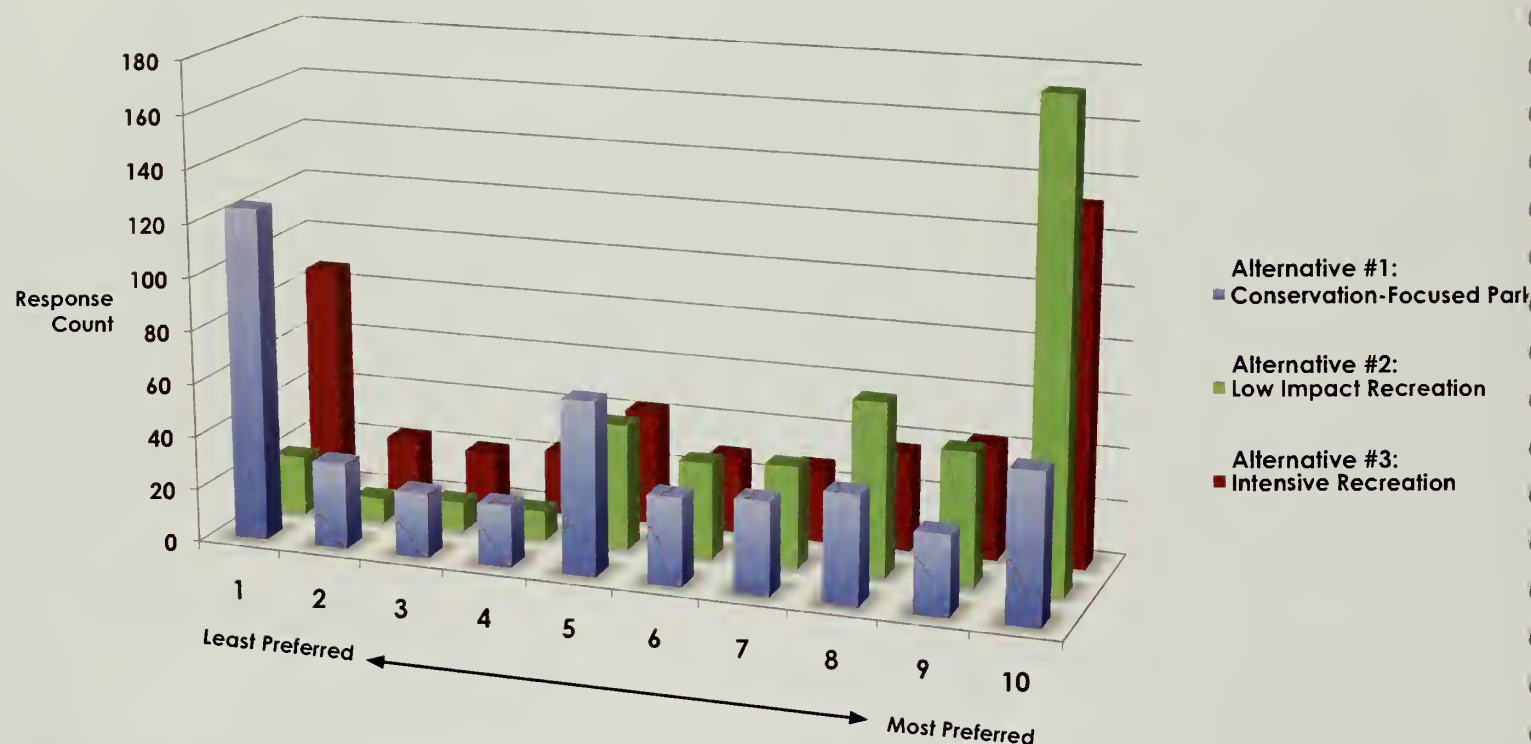
FIGURE 8.3: ALTERNATIVE # 3: INTENSIVE RECREATION AND USE



## SUMMARY OF PUBLIC RESPONSES TO THE THREE ALTERNATIVES

Figure 8.4 displays public input regarding the three alternatives. In the public comment form, respondents were asked to rate the alternatives from one to ten, ten being their most preferred alternative. As shown in the bar graph below, *Alternative #2: Low Impact Recreation* was the most preferred; it had the highest response counts in the six through ten range and the least in the one through five range. Conversely, *Alternative #1: Conservation-Focused Park*, was the least preferred, with high response counts in the one through five range, and the least in the six through ten range.

FIGURE 8.4: PUBLIC PREFERENCE FOR THE THREE ALTERNATIVES



Respondents were also asked what they liked most about the alternatives, and what they would change. Their open-ended responses reflected a wide range of opinions, but in summary, they most often indicated a desire for more opportunities for mountain biking, climbing, hiking, and camping (in that order). Please see Appendix A for more comment form results, including text from all open-ended responses from the public.

Using the feedback obtained from the public, along with input and direction from the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, a preferred alternative for Chimney Rock State Park was prepared and is described in Chapters 10 of this master plan.





# 9 PARK DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

## OVERVIEW

This chapter outlines some of the development issues associated with planning new park facilities at Chimney Rock State Park. Locations for day use areas, visitor facilities, and park staff facilities were examined and the opportunities and constraints weighed for each. In *Chapter 10: Recommendations*, many of these issues are addressed with recommendations.

## VISITOR CENTER LOCATION

There is a substantial lack of access to large areas of flat, developable space within Chimney Rock State Park. The steep elevations and diverse topography that produce such tremendous views also limit low-impact options for facility development. Among the 4,531 acres that exist in Chimney Rock State Park, only about 3 percent are feasible for developed park facilities. With the exception of the Meadows, there are no other flat areas on currently-owned park property that offer the space necessary to accommodate a visitor center, parking, and vehicle access. Other sites within the study area that were considered are explained below.

### 1) THE ORCHARDS

The Orchards, an abandoned apple orchard located at the top of Chimney Rock Mountain, provides a substantial amount of flat space. Views to the gorge are afforded by the high elevation. Despite the opportunities, there are numerous constraints. The Orchards proposal was not well-received at the public open house. Participants were concerned about the environmental impacts, expense, and aesthetics. Roadway access to this area is constrained by a private, unpaved jeep trail and currently requires a utility vehicle to navigate. Improving this corridor to public roadway standards will require substantial rerouting and reconstruction. Road construction will adversely impact the landscape and surrounding wildlife. Additionally, a travel time more than 45 minutes will be necessary for visitors driving from the existing park entrance.



*The Orchards is feasible for the development of park facilities, however road access is the limiting constraint.*

## 2) CAMPGROUNDS NEAR LAKE LURE TOWN HALL

Conveniently located just south of U.S. Route 64/74A, across from Lake Lure Town Hall, is a tract of land that was previously operated as a private campground. The tract totals 16 acres, with two neglected ponds and five acres of flat developable space. The former campgrounds are still privately owned, and would require acquisition by the State of North Carolina.

While this location is feasible geographically, operational issues pose constraints if a visitor center were constructed in this location. The Rocky Broad River and U.S. Route 64/74A are barriers currently dividing the park, creating a disconnect between parklands north and south of these areas. The goal of creating a park core will be difficult to accomplish with a visitor center at this location.

Visitor parking will be a major issue from a capacity and management standpoint. Of the 16 acres on the tract, only five acres are actually considered developable for a low impact facility. Much of this space will be used for park facilities and an entrance road, with a marginal amount remaining for visitor parking.

Finally, it may be challenging for the Town of Lake Lure, Village of Chimney Rock, Hickory Nut Gorge representatives and Chimney Rock State Park staff to target each visitor's experience with multiple operations occurring in a shared-use facility. Having a separate location solely for park visitors will better distinguish the park visitor experience.

## 3) LAKE LURE TOWN CENTER

The Town of Lake Lure is reviving landscape architect E.S. Draper's 1926 plan for the Lake Lure Town Center. The Town Center Plan was envisioned to contain two retail buildings, a hotel and a bus station. The Lake Lure Inn and Arcade were constructed and remain in use to this day. Consideration was given to locating the proposed Chimney Rock State Park Visitor Center within the town center. Under the proposal, the state park would share space with the Town of Lake Lure, Village of Chimney Rock, and other tourism interests in a regional visitor center. The N.C. Division of State Parks and Recreation staff determined that a shared environment would not satisfy the operational requirements of a visitor center.

The division does support working closely with the Town of Lake Lure, Chimney Rock Village and other agencies and organizations to establish a regional tourism center within the town center that could provide residents and visitors with important information about venues, attractions, activities and events.

*The original 1926 Lake Lure  
Town Center Plan*







## RECREATIONAL ACCESS FACILITIES

Providing visitor access to the natural opportunities offered at Chimney Rock State Park requires careful planning in order to balance development and use with natural resource protection in or near these areas. Chimney Rock State Park is largely undeveloped, which makes it particularly attractive to conservation and nature-based recreation enthusiasts. By renovating existing park areas where feasible and providing new facilities, visitation will inevitably increase. Dispersing visitors through multiple day use areas will limit impact and potential overuse.

Ideal locations for day use recreation are those that have flat, suitable space to accommodate parking for up to 50 vehicles, existing roadway access, the ability to connect visitors to north and south Chimney Rock State Park, and are outside significant natural heritage area boundaries. Day use areas should be located away from residences and neighborhoods where possible to minimize land use incompatibilities. Operational access should also be available for efficient park staff maintenance and patrol. Land for day use areas, much like the Visitor Center, is very limited within the study area.

Using existing public roadways, access opportunities were examined along U.S. Route 64/74A, Boys Camp Road, Buffalo Creek Road, Shumont Road, Sugarloaf Mountain Road, and World's Edge Road. Travel time from the park entrance is a significant issue (ranging from 15 minutes to one hour) as is existing roadway conditions and adjacent land uses. Many roadways will need improvements if used for public access to park day use areas. With the exception of U.S. Route 64/74A, Boys Camp Road, Buffalo Creek Road, and World's Edge Road, day use areas along existing roadways are limited to these areas only within Chimney Rock State Park. The justification is explained on the following pages.

### SHUMONT ROAD

Shumont Road connects with N.C. Highway 9 approximately two miles north of U.S. Route 64/74A. Shumont Road is a narrow mountain road that climbs in elevation and winds through residential properties. The roadway is paved before it terminates a few hundred feet west of Eagle Rock. South of Shumont Road and west of Shumont Mountain, an 84-acre parcel of land was studied for its potential to serve the northwestern region of the park. It's suitable topography, available space, and potential connections to Shumont Road were opportunities for consideration of a day use area.

Further study indicates that a day use area at Shumont Mountain will require substantial improvements to Shumont Road and additional land acquisition. Despite the potential connections provided by Shumont Road, public access will need to be further developed if a day use area is proposed. This connection would require easements across private property or the acquisition of property adjacent to Shumont Road. Also, adjacent landowners expressed concerns about current trespassing issues being exacerbated by the proximity of a public access area to their homes.



*State park boundary gate  
near the end of Shumont  
Road*

## SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN ROAD

The majority of developable land along Sugarloaf Mountain Road is privately owned. Where park boundary intersects with the roadway, topography and natural features limit the space required for day use area facilities. Sugarloaf Mountain Road is also east of a significant natural heritage area known as Cloven Cliffs. At the end of the roadway is a small community of homeowners. By increasing park traffic in this area with the introduction of a day use area, the privacy and environmental sensitivity of the Cloven Cliffs area could be compromised. At World's Edge, just south and east of Sugarloaf Mountain Road, a more suitable opportunity exists for public access.

## KING TRACT

The King Tract is a 362-acre property that sits on the north slopes of Rumbling Bald. The tract is currently owned by The Nature Conservancy, and will eventually be transferred to the State of North Carolina to become part of Chimney Rock State Park. With the acquisition of the King Tract, The Nature Conservancy has increased natural resource protection around Rumbling Bald Mountain. Existing public access to the King Tract through park property is unavailable. Acquisition of additional property or easements across adjacent private property would be required to provide visitor access. In order for the King Tract to support future recreational activity, access should be planned in partnership with the Town of Lake Lure through the Weed Patch Mountain property.

## WEED PATCH MOUNTAIN

Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy owns the 1,527-acre Weed Patch Mountain, a tract located north of Rumbling Bald. Weed Patch Mountain borders the northern edge of the King Tract and extends east toward Buffalo Creek Road. Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy has expressed interest in transferring ownership of Weed Patch Mountain to the State of North Carolina for its inclusion in Chimney Rock State Park. The conservation of Weed Patch Mountain protects views from Rumbling Bald. It also provides a conservation buffer for the northern part of Chimney Rock State Park.

Currently, no public access is available at Weed Patch Mountain. At the northern edge of Lake Lure, Buffalo Creek Road continues through a private neighborhood, extending north to the eastern boundary of property owned by the Town of Lake Lure. This property is adjacent to the southeastern corner of Weed Patch Mountain. The town has developed a vision for a future park which will include hiking trails, mountain biking trails, picnicking, and a small parking area. Working in partnership, the Town of Lake Lure and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation could make public access to Weed Patch Mountain and the King Tract available through this property.





## TRANSPORTATION IN THE HICKORY NUT GORGE

A large number of visitors currently travel to the Hickory Nut Gorge to visit Chimney Rock State Park, the Chimney Rock Village, and the Town of Lake Lure. The Hickory Nut Gorge experiences a substantial amount of vehicle traffic in peak season, and with the proposed park improvements, congestion and parking are anticipated to become an issue that will effect the entire region. This issue has become a growing concern for residents, visitors, and park staff. It is advantageous to plan now for a transit element so that when new park facilities are being implemented, a seamless integration can occur.



*Overflow parking at the Meadows is full during peak season*

## PROPOSED PARK ENTRANCE ROAD

With the proposed park improvements at Chimney Rock State Park, there will inevitably be an increase in visitation. A shorter, more efficient route of travel into the core of the park will provide more time-efficient response for emergency, patrol, and fire response, and will help to mitigate vehicle congestion in the gorge. Significant improvements will be required to bring the existing park entrance road up to modern standards for two-way travel, including time and resources. Introducing a new park entrance road will not only support the Hickory Nut Gorge Transit System, it will become a corridor for bicycle and pedestrian access and accommodate the modernization of state park utilities such as water, sewer, electrical, and high speed telecommunications. With minor improvements, the existing entrance road will become a one-way egress road allowing for safer circulation into and out of the park.

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# 10 PARK DEVELOPMENT PLAN

## OVERVIEW

This master plan has defined the vision, goals, and objectives for the future development of Chimney Rock State Park. After considering the three development alternatives and obtaining N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation comments, a park development program consistent with the North Carolina State Parks mission statement was identified for the park. The synthesis of these components produced the following results for the recommended facilities.

This chapter includes recommendations for future parkland acquisition, access and recreational development, interpretive opportunities, and conservation and resource management. It features detailed recommendations for existing facility improvements. A graphic of the proposed park master plan is illustrated in Figure 10.1.

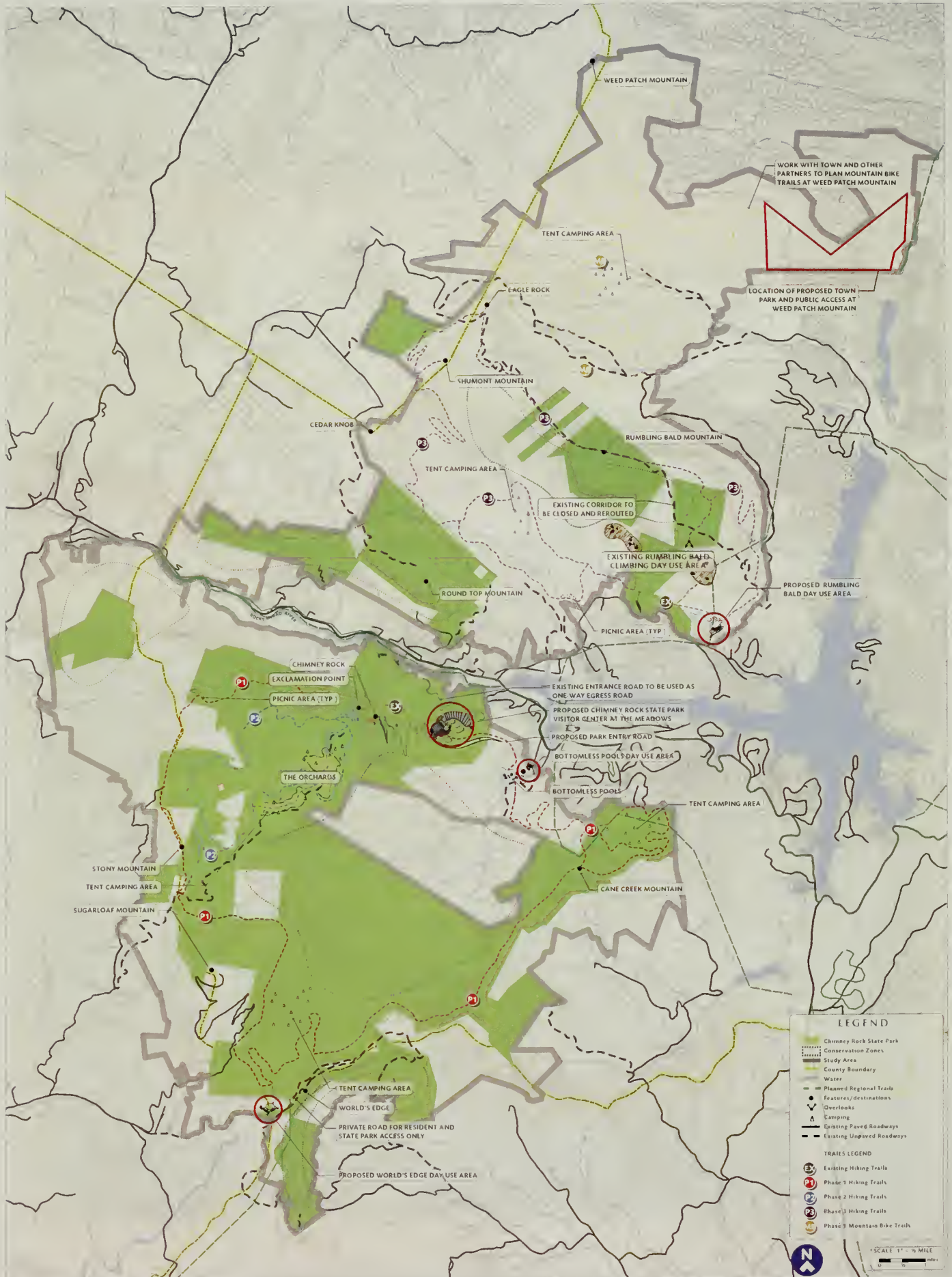
The recommendations are designed to rectify operations and management concerns, correct for deficiencies in the present number and type of facilities, and to provide more opportunities for a variety of park users and visitors.



*Spray cliffs at Hickory Nut Falls*



FIGURE 10.1 CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK MASTER PLAN







# EXISTING FACILITIES IMPROVEMENTS

## REPAIRS AND RENOVATION

The Chimney Rock Attraction has expanded since opening in 1887 to include an entry road and bridge, entrance towers, tunnel and elevator, parking area, walkways, trails, toilet buildings, overlook deck, and several concession buildings. Many of the infrastructure additions were initiated in the 1920s and completed in the late 1940s. The concession structures were completed between the 1980s and early 2000s.

The Old Rock Café's interior and exterior will be restored and renovated. This will extend the longevity of the building and improve visitor experience. The park entrance towers are historic and iconic structures; therefore, an interpretive area will be provided with educational signage and exhibits for viewing. The interpretive area will be accessible by foot so that visitors can use the interpretive area while shopping or dining at the Village of Chimney Rock. To improve circulation and congestion issues both inside and outside the park, the existing park entrance road will be redesigned as a single outbound roadway from the Meadows to the Village of Chimney Rock. A new two-lane roadway will be built from the Town of Lake Lure to the Meadows, while the roadway from the Meadows to the Cliff Dwellers parking lot will remain a two-way road with surface improvements.

The metal warehouse, maintenance shop, park office, and attached maintenance shed will be consolidated into a new complex near the proposed visitor center at the Meadows. Relocating or rebuilding these structures will strengthen park operations, improve communications, and localize maintenance response. The ticket plaza will be redesigned and relocated as a new energy-efficient structure near the proposed visitor center. The redesign will allow both fee- and non fee-based visitation at the new visitor center. The Classroom at the Meadows, Grady's Discovery Den, and existing Toilet Building will be consolidated within the new visitor center to improve visitor experience and unify park design. Where feasible, buildings and materials will be reused. The pavilion on the Meadows will be relocated with additional picnic tables to accommodate the new visitor parking area.

The Private Lodge will be re-purposed as seasonal staff barracks. The building will be renovated and restored with sustainable materials. The retaining wall and parking area at Cliff Dwellers will be enhanced to improve the condition and to accommodate increased parking and visitation. The retaining wall will be reconstructed, the parking area will be repaved, and the stormwater network redesigned. The Cliff Dwellers Gift Shop's interior and exterior finishes will be renovated and consolidated into a one-stop shop that provides food, beverage, and gifts for sale to visitors. Parts of the elevator and tunnel are scheduled to be restored in 2011. These improvements will improve accessibility and operating efficiency while introducing the opportunity for park branding. Moonshiner's Cave will be repurposed as a geologic exhibit, a theme that is more consistent with N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation's mission. To provide improved educational facilities directly at the source, the Sky Lounge will become an interpretive area. Concessions, café seating, and the Sky Lounge gift shop will be relocated elsewhere in the park.

## IMPROVEMENTS TO EXISTING TRAILS

Many of the existing trails are in need of maintenance and improvements to better serve the growing recreational needs of park visitors. Some of these trails were poorly sited and constructed and are therefore not sustainable. Improving the trail tread in heavily overused areas to limit user impacts may prevent the need for rerouting. A comprehensive interpretive signage network will promote park resources while protecting natural areas.

The entire stair structure and park boardwalk network will be inventoried for structural integrity. Boardwalks that are heavily overused will be rebuilt, and non-skid materials will be used in damp areas. Improvements to the structures will extend the life of the boardwalks and improve visitor safety. A project to improve a

section of the stair network will commence in 2012. The Great Woodland Adventure Trail will be continually maintained and expanded as needs arise. Future trail connections will be provided. The Four Seasons Trail will be improved to protect natural resources and improve the quality of the trail. In areas with heavy overuse, boardwalk will be constructed to reduce erosion and long-term impacts to surrounding ecology. Hickory Nut Falls Trail will be continually maintained to improve visitor experience. Adequate lookout areas and seating will be provided. Increased visitation may further trail overuse and trail hardening may be considered in eroded areas. The Outcroppings Trail is heavily overused and consistently maintained. Stair structures will be rebuilt that are in need of repair, and non-skid materials will be used in damp areas. The use of sustainable materials will extend the life of the structures and increase visitor safety. Pulpit Rock, the Subway, and the Grotto will be reopened as trail destinations after structural improvements are made to the boardwalk and trails. The Skyline Trail to Exclamation Point has a 200-foot gain in elevation; therefore gravel or natural surfacing are not feasible materials for the long term of this trail. More structural surfacing will be provided such as boardwalk or stair trails to improve overall maintenance and visitor experience.

Additional miles of undesignated footpaths and jeep trails are located on the recently acquired properties. No signage currently exists on these undesignated corridors. Because these footpaths and jeep trails were poorly sited and constructed, they have become severely denuded in many areas and are considered unusable. A comprehensive trails review will be conducted by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation prior to any new trail construction. Once newly designated trails have been established at Chimney Rock State Park, the remaining footpaths and jeep trails will be closed for public use and allowed to naturalize.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR REPAIRS AND RENOVATION: \$850,000

## PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER AT THE MEADOWS

Chimney Rock State Park affords opportunities for recreation, education, and stewardship of western North Carolina's most unique and significant natural resources. The development of a park visitor center will provide a focal point for interpretive programs, a hub for natural resource-based recreation, and more efficient park operations, patrol, and management.

The Meadows is a four-acre, relatively flat parcel of land located on park property along the existing park entrance road. It is currently used by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation as seasonal overflow parking and is the location for Grady's Discovery Den. Just south of the Meadows is the fee gate and other park facility buildings. The actual footprint of the "Meadows area" is approximately 15 acres of total developable land for a visitor center. Existing roadway and utility access are already in place. This location also strengthens the central park core concept, and allows the park visitor to experience the park in its natural setting. If the fee gate and park administration buildings were integrated with the proposed visitor building on the Meadows' high point, the remaining amount of space would be available for visitor and overflow parking (see Figure 10.2).

### DESIGN CONCEPT

The Chimney Rock State Park visitor center will have the capability to serve a broad range of park visitors, as identified in Chapter 4. The visitor center will offer diverse opportunities for recreation and education. The surrounding trails and facility will engage visitors with a 15-minute visit to obtain park information, or a full day of experiencing interpretive areas, hiking, educational programs, and exhibits. The visitor center will become a hub for regional recreational opportunities and local activities to accommodate diverse visitor interests and backgrounds. Visitors of all abilities will have the opportunity to explore the facility and design their own experience at the park.





FIGURE 10.2: VISITOR CENTER AT THE MEADOWS



## VISITOR CENTER

The main visitor center will be 6,500 square feet and constructed at the western end of the Meadows. The building will be designed and implemented using green building strategies aimed at Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification. A facility this size could accommodate 300-400 people at a time. Maintenance and storage will also be located onsite. Utilities are already available at the Meadows and will need improvements to meet the demands of the proposed facilities. The amount of space onsite provides an opportunity to treat stormwater locally with innovative solutions such as infiltration gardens and bioretention areas. These areas will become educational tools to incorporate into interpretive programming. Alternative energy sources such as solar and geothermal heating and cooling will be used to the extent feasible.

## DAY USE

The fee gate will be relocated further up the entrance road so that visitors who access the visitor center obtain information without paying a fee. Those who wish to drive and park at the Chimney Rock elevator will pay admission at the fee gate. Picnic areas, short trails and interpretive areas will be located around the visitor center as well as access to extended trails across the park. A contact station will be located within the

visitor center where visitors can purchase permits and daily parking passes. Information will be available for other park activities and day use areas with directions and maps.

## PARKING

Paved parking will be available for bus and RV parking, with spaces for 300 vehicles. A separate parking area will be provided for ranger vehicles and park staff at the rear of the visitor center. For the paved areas, permeable solutions will be used to the extent feasible. Further soil and drainage improvements will be necessary if permeable solutions are used. Overflow parking has the option to be phased into construction based on budget costs and demand, accommodating up to an additional 500 vehicles.

## PROPOSED ENTRANCE ROAD

In order to satisfy the increase in visitation and reduce vehicle congestion, a new two-way entrance road is proposed that will connect the visitor center parking area to Proctor Road. The new entrance road will be constructed on a wide, flat ridge that exists between a stream along the eastern edge of the Meadows and southern parts of Proctor Road. From its intersection at the first bend along Proctor Road, the new half-mile road will feature a split inbound and outbound lane design to minimize impact to the existing forest canopy. The lower section of Proctor Road will be improved to accommodate the additional park traffic.

The roadway will be built to modern standards, capable of supporting RVs, vehicles with trailers, and buses, and will also contain bicycle lanes on both the inbound and outbound lanes. It will be designed for low speed traffic with narrow lanes and minimal cut and fill. This new road will become the Chimney Rock State Park entrance road, while the former entrance road will become a one-way egress road to Chimney Rock Village. Peak visitation in the park occurs in the early morning and mid-day hours, before Chimney Rock Village merchants are open for business. Transforming the current entrance road into a one-way exit road will deliver state park visitors to Chimney Rock Village where they can shop and dine during late morning, afternoon and evening hours. The Meadows will be designed to direct existing traffic flow into the Village of Chimney Rock.

Additionally, the existing park road from the Meadows to the Cliff Dwellers parking area will be improved and widened. This project would add or improve retaining walls, add culverts for stormwater drainage and upgrade the utilities. Utility improvements include a new water line with pump stations, gravity sewer line, and telecommunications and electric lines.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR VISITOR CENTER AT THE MEADOWS: \$20,751,200

# HICKORY NUT GORGE TRANSIT CIRCULATOR

The Hickory Nut Gorge Transit Circulator is a bus system that would shuttle visitors to and from destinations in the Hickory Nut Gorge. Partnerships could be developed among the local Tourism Development Authority, Chimney Rock Village, the Town of Lake Lure, and other regional stakeholders to help sponsor the circulator and stimulate the local economy by developing a communications strategy that encourages visitors to support local businesses. Providing an alternative transportation option will also help the young, disabled, and senior citizens enjoy more of the region's attractions. The introduction of an electric or natural gas-powered transit circulator will do more than help mitigate parking concerns and reduce traffic volumes. Reducing the number of vehicles entering the gorge will also cut down on emissions and improve air quality.



FIGURE 10.3: TRANSIT CIRCULATOR ROUTE



### SUGGESTED ROUTE

Figure 10.3 illustrates a potential route for the circulator. The transit circulator's route will begin at the visitor center in Chimney Rock State Park. Operating clockwise, the vehicle will exit the one-way egress road and stop at Chimney Rock Village, Town of Lake Lure, and the Bottomless Pools day use area. The circulator will return to the visitor center via the proposed entrance road from Proctor Road. Concurrently, an internal circulator will transport visitors to and from the visitor center and the Chimney Rock elevator. The final routes will be determined with input from stakeholders. Covered kiosk stops will be developed displaying detailed regional maps, brochures, and graphics which clearly depict the region's features and attractions.

### FREQUENCY OF SHUTTLES

Shuttle speed, number of stops, size and number of vehicles, and vehicle capacity in turn define the frequency of the circulator. In addition, peak season and surrounding traffic congestion will also impact operations. To ensure that the circulator is convenient to use, it will be important to provide frequent loops, especially during peak season. Vehicles will travel anywhere from 10-20 miles per hour and have the capacity to transport 10 to 25 patrons. While shuttles that are large have the capacity for higher numbers of visitors, slower average speeds make for increased headways between stops. The roadways at Chimney Rock State Park are narrow and winding in many areas. Providing smaller, maneuverable vehicles at more frequent intervals will contribute to an improved visitor experience. Headways of no more than 15 minutes at each stop are recommended to encourage use.

Careful planning with other stakeholders for the operations and management of the circulator will be crucial to its success. Addressing key trip generators, patterns, vehicle type and size, number of vehicles, operating hours, and ridership potential will require a more detailed study.

## PROPOSED DAY USE AREAS

Several new day use areas are proposed that will provide user access to the south, central, and north regions of Chimney Rock State Park. Information, signage, and maps will be available for each day use area at the proposed visitor center. The following locations will be located and designed to protect areas of significant natural heritage and provide a wider variety of opportunities for park users to experience Chimney Rock State Park. At a minimum, each day use area will include vehicle parking, contact stations, a toilet building, hiking trail connections, and adequate receptacles to manage refuse. For all proposed day use areas, buildings will be designed and implemented using green building strategies.

### WORLD'S EDGE

One of the southernmost destinations in Chimney Rock State Park, World's Edge takes its name from the one-mile long series of steep, southeast-facing slopes that fall away to sweeping views of the Hickory Nut Gorge. Residing in an area rich with significant natural communities, World's Edge is remote, wild, and attractive to hikers.

South at the end of World's Edge Road, a 29-acre tract of land stretches along the World's Edge escarpment. The tract's proximity to World's Edge Road and the amount of developable space make it an ideal location for day use that could accompany visitor parking and picnic areas. An existing residence on the property provides ample space for an interpretive area with exhibits and an information desk. A large deck at the rear of the residence affords 180-degree views out to the western piedmont, making it an ideal viewing platform. In addition, smaller rooms in the main residence could serve as park office space and storage. Figure 10.4 illustrates the proposed layout of facilities at World's Edge.

A ranger residence or remote patrol cabin is proposed at World's Edge due to its distance from the proposed visitor center. Travel times on existing roadways from the Chimney Rock State Park entrance to World's Edge exceed 45 minutes. The ranger residence will be located on existing park property at the north side of World's Edge Road. A ranger residence will improve operations and patrol and allow for southern park access for park staff. The development of this project will require the acquisition of additional land.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR WORLD'S EDGE DAY USE AREA: \$650,000



*View from World's Edge*





FIGURE 10.4: WORLD'S EDGE DAY USE AREA



## BOTTOMLESS POOLS

The historic Bottomless Pools attraction is proposed to be reopened as a day use area. Reopening of the attraction will require acquisition of additional land. The historic home at Bottomless Pools will be renovated and re-used as a contact station or information center. Some elements of the historic attraction will be restored and reopened for public access and use. For example, the trail system will be restored and constructed to provide new observation platforms for viewing the famed Bottomless Pools.

South of Lake Lure Inn, where Beach Street connects with Bottomless Pools Road, there is adequate space for a driveway entrance and parking for 50 vehicles (see Figure 10.5). To limit costs and preserve the character of the Bottomless Pools, the covered bridge will be restored and reopened to pedestrian traffic only. This will permit viewing of the pools and cut down on vehicle congestion and the necessity for more paved surfacing. Interpretive areas will be located in and around the bridge and near the pools, and to the extent desired by N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, buildings renovated and operated as historic exhibits. Visitors will enjoy short hiking opportunities, picnicking, observation and interpretive areas at the pools, and connections to extended hiking trails to Chimney Rock and Cane Creek Mountain.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR BOTTOMLESS POOLS DAY USE AREA: \$700,000



*Bottomless Pools*





FIGURE 10.5: BOTTOMLESS POOLS DAY USE AREA



## RUMBLING BALD

The existing climbing day use area at Rumbling Bald, located off Boys Camp Road, provides parking for 35 vehicles and trail connections to climbing and bouldering areas. Much of the climbing areas and trails at Rumbling Bald are in need of maintenance and improvements to better serve the growing recreational needs of visitors and to protect natural resources. The demand for access and use at this location is not satisfied with the current parking capacity and therefore needs to be expanded in the future. To ensure that Rumbling Bald will accommodate growing visitation, an additional day use area is proposed further east at the end of Boys Camp Road to include additional parking and sanitary facilities. This new facility will allow for increased access to regional hiking and other activities while taking the pressure off the existing climbing day use area. Figure 10.6 shows a potential layout for the proposed day use area. Where Boys Camp Road ends and becomes unpaved, a large flat area is the location for this additional day use area at Rumbling Bald.

A contact station is proposed at the Rumbling Bald day use area, along with parking for approximately 75 vehicles. Where feasible, all parking areas will feature permeable surfacing materials, and stormwater will be treated locally through infiltration gardens or bioretention areas. A toilet building, picnic area and kiosk is also proposed. From the proposed Rumbling Bald day use area, visitors will access loop trails as well as connections to Rumbling Bald.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR RUMBLING BALD DAY USE AREA: \$940,200



*Under the tree canopy at Rumbling Bald*





FIGURE 10.6: RUMBLING BALD DAY USE AREA



## RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK

Chimney Rock State Park's 4,531 acres are principally untouched landscapes. It provides habitat for some of the most significant wildlife communities in the country. Its resources have the potential to make it a world-class destination for natural resource-based recreation. A combination of use and protection must be achieved that blends conservation, protection, and preservation of natural resources with access and enjoyment of those features. The following items should be considered when developing recreational activities at Chimney Rock State Park:

- Separate all proposed trails, picnicking, day use areas, and camping away from documented sensitive natural resource areas. Reroute existing trails if their alignment threatens wildlife habitat, is unsustainable, or compromises public safety.
- Develop a signage program for the park that includes wayfinding, regulatory, and environmental education signage for the natural heritage areas.
- Develop a park map and brochure that details allowable activities and depicts recreational opportunities offered in Chimney Rock State Park.
- Provide a range of recreational options at various skill levels for a diverse visitor experience.

### REGIONAL HIKING TRAILS

A regional greenway and trail system is emerging throughout the Hickory Nut Gorge and Lake Lure region. This system is comprised of four important trails:

- Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail
- Lake Lure Summits Trail
- Town of Lake Lure Trails and Greenways
- Chimney Rock State Park Trails

The majority of the regional trail system is planned and designed to serve the needs of hikers, walkers and nature lovers. Some elements of the regional trail network may support equestrians and mountain biking.

The Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail extends from Hickory Nut Gap, Little Pisgah Mountain and Bear Wallow Mountain to Gerton Village, then on to Bearwallow Village, over Raven Rock and Blue Rock Mountain and on to World's Edge in Chimney Rock State Park. The total distance of this proposed trail is more than 60 miles.

The Town of Lake Lure has a plan to establish an extensive network of greenways and trails. The adopted 2010 Comprehensive Plan for Lake Lure illustrates a greenway network that extends around the lake, and links with adjacent streams to provide connections to residential, commercial, retail and tourist areas of the town. Portions of the proposed greenway also extend to Chimney Rock State Park.

An extensive hiking trail system is planned for Chimney Rock State Park, comprised of a southern loop trail, the Chimney Rock Mountain Loop Trail, and hiking trails in the northern portions of the park, principally on and around Rumbling Bald Mountain. The total distance of proposed trails is approximately 50 miles. Trail users in the northern section of the park will be able to connect to the southern section of the park by way of the town's greenway system.





## PROPOSED HIKING TRAILS

A substantial amount of new hiking trails in Chimney Rock State Park are recommended in this master plan. Trails of various difficulty, length, and interest are proposed to provide a diverse experience that will be enjoyed by the park visitor, regardless of ability. Families, senior citizens, and experienced hikers will have the ability to design their trip to their interest.

A comprehensive signage program will be provided that communicates trail distances, times, and destinations for all proposed trails. Trail destinations will be opportunities for educational exhibits and interpretive signage. An example of a typical hiking trail at Chimney Rock State Park is shown in Figure 10.7.

## CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK TRAILS

A new sustainable route for the Skyline Trail was established in the master planning process to take trail enthusiasts to new observation areas where historical, breathtaking views of Hickory Nut Gorge, Lake Lure and Hickory Nut Falls can be enjoyed. Figure 10.8 illustrates the new realigned trail.

Historically, the Skyline Trail and Cliff Trail have provided hikers with access to some of the highest elevations and most stunning natural resources of Chimney Rock Mountain. These breathtaking trails have been some of the most beloved in the history of Chimney Rock Park. In 2008, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation closed portions of these trails in order to evaluate them for future access and use.



FIGURE 10.7: TYPICAL HIKING TRAIL

It is important that Chimney Rock State Park balance the conservation, protection and preservation of natural resources with access and enjoyment of those resources. The former alignment of the Cliff Trail and upper portion of the Skyline Trail cannot be properly managed to support public access and use, due to environmental factors, concerns regarding public health, safety and welfare, and budget constraints.

Therefore, the Cliff Trail and upper portion of the Skyline Trail will be dismantled and removed. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will explore opportunities to work with an outdoor adventure contractor that offers mountaineering or other high adventure recreation access along the route of the former Cliff Trail.

A new trail alignment will be established from Exclamation Point along the top of Chimney Rock Mountain to designated observation areas on top of the mountain. Observation platforms will be constructed to provide views of the top of Hickory Nut Falls, Hickory Nut Gorge and Lake Lure. The trail will stay inside the existing tree line and off the cliff faces of Chimney Rock Mountain.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR NEW SKYLINE TRAIL ALIGNMENT: \$163,000

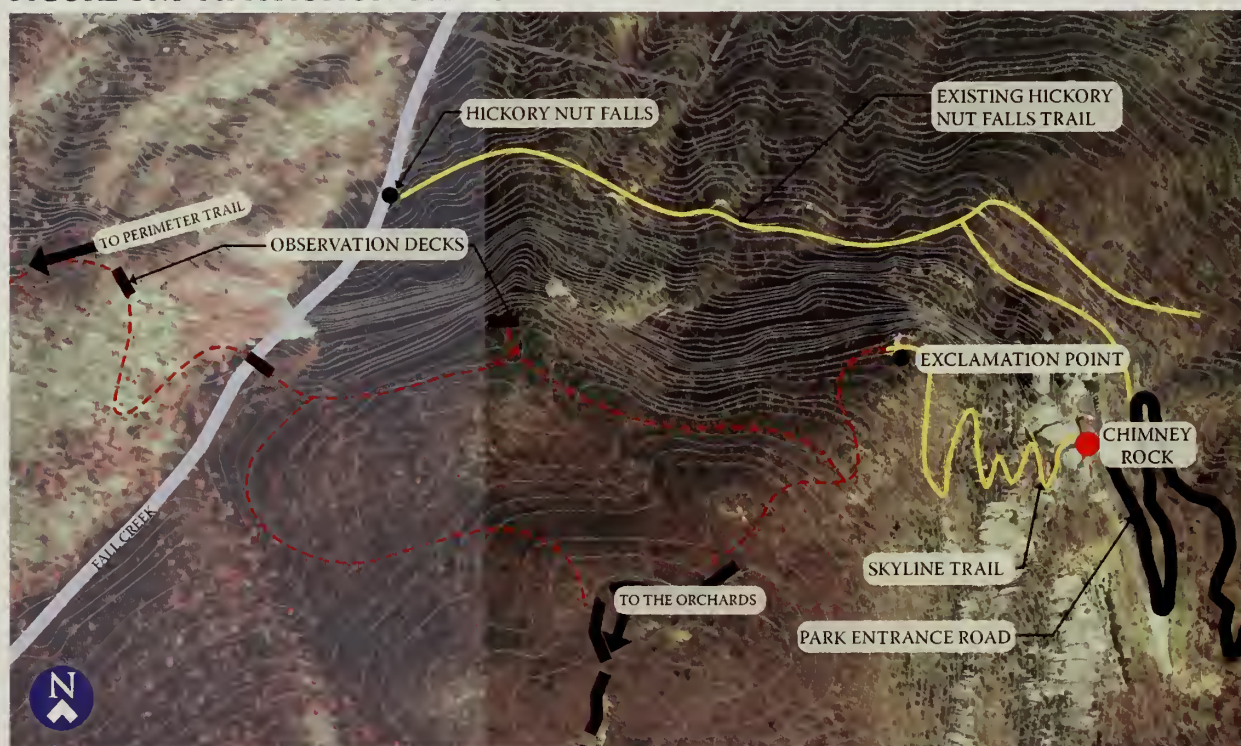
A second trail alignment will be established that extends to the proposed primitive campground located at the Orchards, and connects to the proposed Chimney Rock Perimeter Trail.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR ORCHARDS LOOP TRAIL: \$350,000

### PERIMETER TRAIL

The perimeter trail proposed at Chimney Rock State Park is an extended, multi-day experience for long distance hikers of all abilities. The perimeter trail showcases the biologically diverse natural resources within the park while offering hike-in primitive camping in a secluded environment. Trail users will access

FIGURE 10.8: ATTRACTION TRAILS







the 15-mile perimeter trail from several park locations. Visitors will enjoy hiking the ridges of Cane Creek Mountain, World's Edge, and Sugarloaf Mountain. Short, looped hiking options will also be provided near the day use areas. Hikers will enjoy Pool Creek and views from Stony and Rich Mountain. Access to hike-in primitive camping will be available from most day use areas.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR PERIMETER TRAIL: \$612,000

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR WORLD'S EDGE TRAIL: \$152,000

### **CANE CREEK LOOP TRAIL**

A proposed trail in the central section of the park will connect the visitor center at the Meadows to Bottomless Pools. This trail will connect with local town greenways so visitors can access adjacent regional activities. Visitors at the proposed day use area at Bottomless Pools will have the option to connect to two looped trails at the northeast part of the Cane Creek Mountain Trail.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR CANE CREEK LOOP TRAIL: \$117,000

### **NORTHERN CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK TRAILS**

Hiking trails in northern Chimney Rock State Park are proposed around southern Rumbling Bald, Shumont Mountain, and Eagle Rock. From Eagle Rock, trails will be routed south of the summit, away from residences. An existing jeep trail extends from Eagle Rock along the ridgeline of Rumbling Bald Mountain. While parts of the jeep trail are usable for hiking, eastern portions of this trail are dangerously eroded and will need rerouting to the north to sustain foot traffic and to protect adjacent natural resources.

Backcountry trails are proposed at the far reaches north of Rumbling Bald, where hike-in primitive camping will be available. Backcountry trails in this location are more remote and further from day use areas. Connections to Weed Patch Mountain through mountain biking trails will also be possible from this area in northern Chimney Rock State Park. Vehicle access and trailhead facilities to northern Rumbling Bald and Weed Patch Mountain will be developed through a partnership with the Town of Lake Lure and other stakeholders.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR RUMBLING BALD MOUNTAIN TRAILS: \$1,064,000

All proposed Chimney Rock State Park trails will be designed sustainably, using natural surfaces and following existing contours. Sustainable trails are designed for continual visitor use with minimized impacts. All trails will be constructed with low impact machinery or by hand, where feasible. A successful network of sustainably designed and constructed trails will control stormwater and erosion, keep users on the designated trails, and limit maintenance requirements.

### **HIKE-IN/PRIMITIVE CAMPING**

Hike-in/primitive camping will be available to Chimney Rock State Park visitors. Currently, no camping is permitted at the park, but the demand for a wide range of camping was indicated through the public input process.

No more than eight tent sites will be located at each primitive campground. Fire rings may be permitted at some locations. Wherever possible, primitive camping areas will be sited so as to not degrade the viewshed. All proposed sites will be located away from residences and roadways.

Primitive campgrounds are proposed at Cane Creek Mountain, near World's Edge, at the Orchards, and near the proposed Rumbling Bald day use area. Access to these sites will only be available on foot.

## PRIMITIVE GROUP CAMPING

Camping facilities for organized groups will be based on reservations and will accommodate 10-15 tents. Providing group campsites eliminates displacement of other users from single campsites by large groups. Group camping also reduces noise and overcrowding in primitive camping areas. Primitive group camping will be provided at the Orchards only.

DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM BUDGET FOR PRIMITIVE CAMPSITES THROUGHOUT PARK:  
\$200,000

## PICNICKING

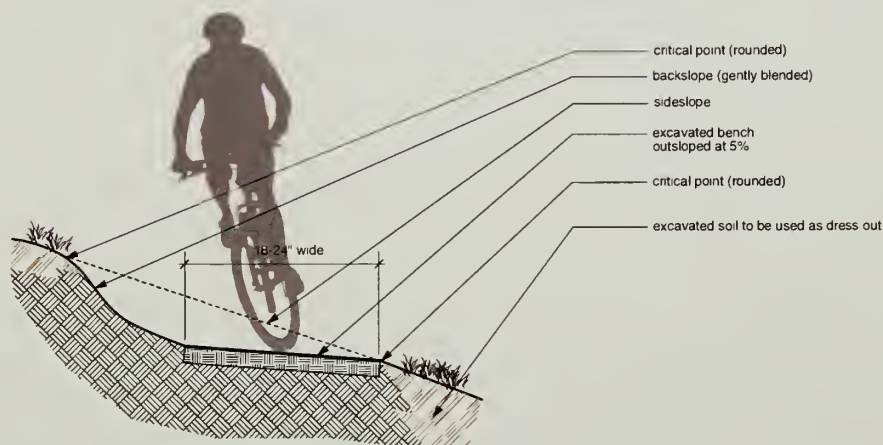
The demand for picnicking facilities continues to grow among park visitors. Existing picnic sites at the attraction are located at waysides along the park entrance road and do not provide adequate space or respite. Proposed picnic areas will be located away from major roadways and include seating, tables, and trash and recycling receptacles at a minimum. Picnicking will be made available to park visitors at all day use areas and at the visitor center. Picnicking will be permitted along the hiking trails in north and south Chimney Rock State Park, however a "leave-no-trace" policy will prevail.

## MOUNTAIN BIKING

A single-track mountain bike trail system is proposed on the Weed Patch Mountain and King tracts to provide a type of trail experience not currently available in the park. Visitors will access Weed Patch Mountain through property owned by the Town of Lake Lure from Buffalo Creek Road. The Town of Lake Lure plans to implement a parking area, trailhead, hiking, and mountain biking facilities at this location. A cooperative agreement with the Town of Lake Lure and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will need to be established regarding the joint operations of this area.

Partnership opportunity is possible with the region's nonprofit mountain biking organization. The Southeastern Off-Road Bicycle Association (SORBA) works with land managers across the southeastern United States to design, construct, and maintain trail networks for mountain biking. SORBA specializes in the design and construction of sustainable trails. If implemented, SORBA trail builders will adhere to International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) design guidelines for all proposed mountain bike trails in Chimney Rock State Park and work closely with park staff to design and implement the trails. Figure 10.9 shows a typical mountain bike trail design proposed at Chimney Rock State Park.

FIGURE 10.9: TYPICAL MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL



*Design guideline information obtained from IMBA*



## EQUESTRIAN TRAILS

Equestrian trails are popular in mountainous regions because horses can negotiate steep terrain in remote areas. Typically, horses require a minimum trail width of at least six feet and a preferred width of 12 feet. Vertical clearances are between 10-12 feet. Although natural tread is recommended, the sub-base and sub-grade of the trail must be compacted to accommodate horses and their riders. Access roads that can support vehicles towing trailers, large parking and staging areas, and access to water will be necessary to support equestrians. These facilities can demand a substantial amount of flat space, a condition that is limited at Chimney Rock State Park.

Opportunities for equestrian trails and facilities were examined within the study area. The only area identified as potentially suitable for either mountain biking and equestrian use in the master plan study area is on the Weed Patch Mountain tract. The only identified access to Weed Patch Mountain tract will be in cooperation with the Town of Lake Lure's planned town park at Buffalo Creek Rd. Due to topographical constraints, the town park will have very limited parking and cannot accommodate equestrian use. As such, equestrian use at Chimney Rock State Park cannot be reasonably provided at this time. Future master plan revisions could consider equestrian use if suitable land with access becomes available. Table 10.2 identifies equestrian opportunities in vicinity to the park.

**TABLE 10.2: EQUESTRIAN TRAILS NEAR CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK**

NAME	LOCATION
River Side Riding Stables	Chimney Rock
Brunner Stables	Hendersonville
Moses Cone Park	Blue Ridge Parkway
Holly View Farm	Dupont State Forest
The Walk Inn	Dupont State Forest
South Toe River Area	Pisgah National Forest
Tsali Horse Trail	Tsali Recreation Area

## ROCK CLIMBING

Rock climbing and bouldering has been a popular recreational activity in the Hickory Nut Gorge for more than 30 years. The Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) and the Access Fund have been active in their role for public land conservation, including the purchase of a six-acre tract on the west side of the Rumbling Bald boulder fields. Chimney Rock State Park currently operates public climbing access from the Rumbling Bald Climbing Day Use Area. Rock climbing occurs along the south facing cliffs of Rumbling Bald and the adjacent boulder fields. The south face of Rumbling Bald contains a network of trails that connect to the climbing cliffs and boulder fields owned by the CCC and The Nature Conservancy. Due to the site's lack of historical land management and growth in popularity, user impacts have been concentrated at Rumbling Bald. These heavily used areas should be restored through cooperative work between the CCC and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. Fox Mountain Guides operates fee-based climbing clinics at the base of Chimney Rock Mountain.

Many of the desired climbing and bouldering areas in the Chimney Rock State Park study area are located in nationally significant natural heritage areas with sensitive ecosystems. Using data from the Natural Heritage and Natural Resources programs, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will work closely with the CCC and the climbing community to develop a comprehensive climbing and bouldering management

plan that determines the extent of opening additional climbing and bouldering areas in the park. The future comprehensive climbing and bouldering management plan should follow three basic conditions to satisfy the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation's goal of balancing conservation, recreation, and education:

- 1) *Climbing and bouldering areas in the state park must be on lands owned by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.* Although the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation provides access to the south face of Rumbling Bald from the climbing day use area on Boys Camp Road, much of the south facing climbing area is on privately-owned property. Access to other popular climbing areas not currently owned by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will be determined by the existing landowners. The comprehensive climbing and bouldering management plan will focus on areas currently owned by state parks.
- 2) *Climbing and bouldering areas must have proper road access.* All state park climbing and bouldering access areas must have a safe, legal, accessible public access. If adequate parking isn't already available, access areas must be feasible for the development of low impact parking areas and hiking trails to the climbing areas. Land in climbing access areas must be owned by either the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation or by a partnering organization or agency.
- 3) *Climbing and bouldering routes and access areas must not negatively impact the park's natural resources.* Protecting natural resources from potential recreational activity impacts will be fact-based, using data obtained from the Natural Heritage Program and Natural Resources Program.

The comprehensive climbing and bouldering management plan will require significant input, discussion, and field verification between the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation, the climbing community, and other stakeholders. Careful consideration will be given to additional climbing area proposals, but in some instances, preventing climbing access in highly sensitive areas will be necessary in order to protect fragile and rare ecosystems. Using the conditions stated above, the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will work with the climbing community to consider opening additional climbing areas through the development of a comprehensive climbing and bouldering management plan.

## INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES

Part of the mission of the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation is to interpret and promote the state's natural heritage and environmental resources. It is also a primary goal of the master plan for Chimney Rock State Park. In addition to the educational facilities proposed at the visitor center, a variety of opportunities exist to interpret the natural heritage of the park and the region. The development of an interpretive network is recommended that will correspond with all proposed trails at Chimney Rock State Park. The network will be self-guided or organized by park staff as guided hikes or educational programs.

The beautiful scenery in Chimney Rock State Park will be enjoyed from vistas and viewing platforms that incorporate interpretive signage. The overlooks will be strategically located along trails and at some day use areas. It is essential that these areas not encroach on any viewsheds or natural resources. Situating overlooks on heavily vegetated bluffs and away from toilet buildings or concessions will help to control noise and crowding.





## SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT BUDGET COSTS

<u>DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM</u>	<u>BUDGET COST</u>
Repairs and Renovation	\$850,000
Visitor Center at the Meadows	\$20,751,200
World's Edge Day Use Area	\$650,000
Bottomless Pools Day Use Area	\$700,000
Rumbling Bald Day Use Area	\$940,200
New Skyline Trail Alignment	\$163,000
Orchards Loop Trail	\$351,000
Perimeter Trail	\$612,000
World's Edge Trail	\$152,000
Cane Creek Loop Trail	\$117,000
Rumbling Bald Mountain Trails	\$1,064,000
<u>Primitive Campsites</u>	<u>\$200,000</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$26,550,400</b>

## LAND ACQUISITION OBJECTIVES

Natural resource protection, scenic preservation, outdoor recreation, and public access will continue to be the primary purposes for which N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation should acquire land to expand Chimney Rock State Park over the next 50 years. A land objectives map is illustrated in Figure 10.10 and summarized on the following pages.

### PRIMARY RESOURCE PROTECTION

The protection of significant natural resources such as significant natural heritage areas, rare species habitat or significant land identified in the biodiversity assessment of the conservation planning tool.

### SCENIC RESOURCE PROTECTION

The protection views of and from the mountains around Lake Lure including Chimney Rock itself.

### WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

The protection of water quality of streams in the state park and flowing from the state park. These include Pool Creek, Wolf Creek, Fall Creek and parts of the Broad River.

### FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

Land identified for future state park facilities such as picnic areas and trail heads.

### BUFFERS

Land to improve boundary management and allow for facilities to be away from incompatible land uses.

### INHOLDINGS

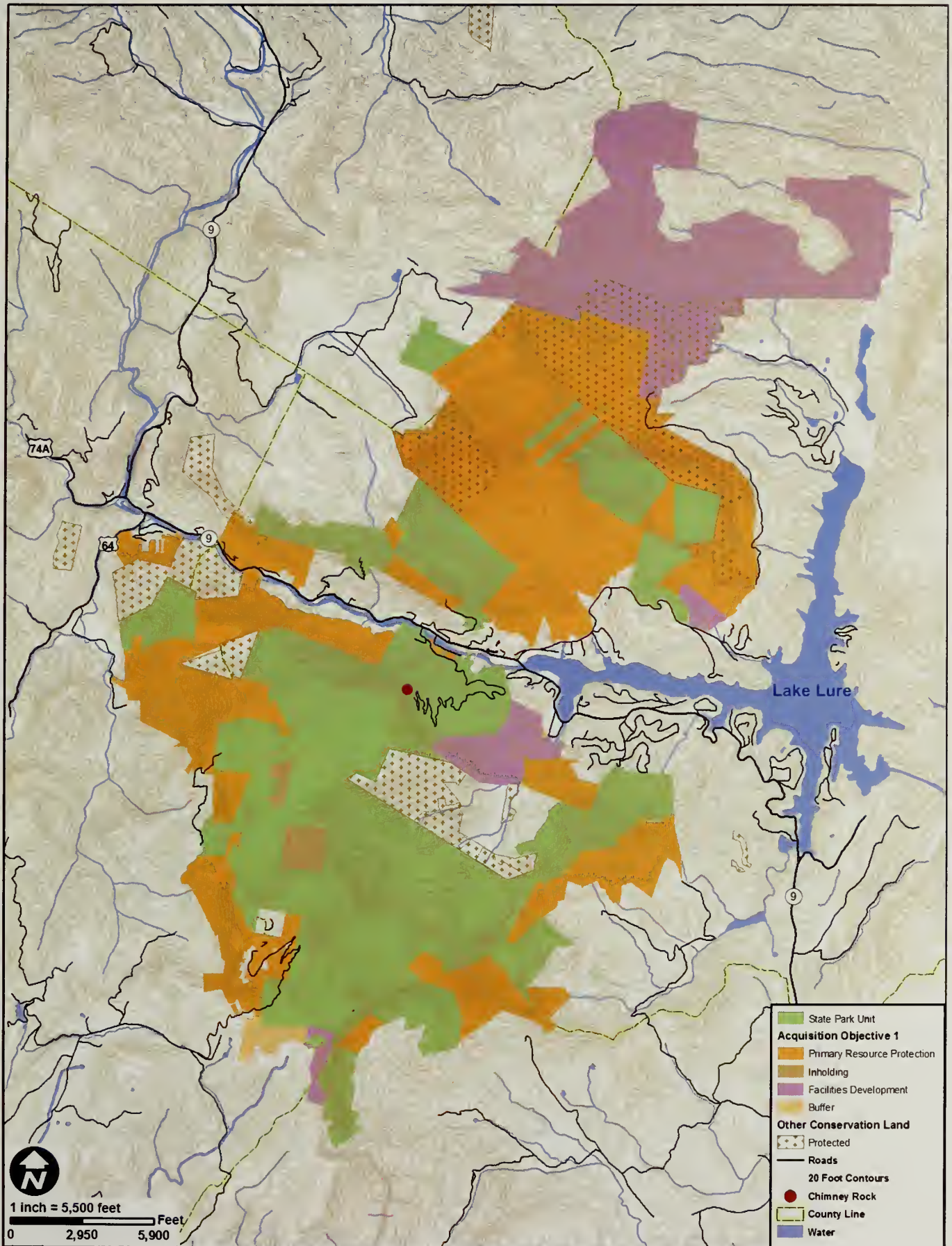
Inholding tracts have existing state park land on multiple sides and/or have access through state park property.

Chimney Rock State Park will continue to be enlarged to support the three primary objectives of the park development program: conservation management, education and stewardship, and access and recreation. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation will eventually complete acquisition of all priority lands that support the state park mission and operations as the partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy, and Foothills Conservancy of North Carolina continues.





FIGURE 10.10 LAND ACQUISITION OBJECTIVES MAP



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# PUBLIC COMMENTS

## OVERVIEW

This appendix features public comments collected during the planning process. There were two different opportunities for public input. More than 150 people attended a public workshop in Lake Lure, North Carolina, on May 26, 2010. During the workshop, participants were invited to talk with project consultants and State Park representatives, view project display boards that provided background information, and comment directly on several alternatives for the future of the park. Several overview presentations were also conducted throughout the course of the day-long workshop.

Approximately 586 people provided their input through public comment forms following the first input session. These were provided in hardcopy format and were also distributed online, through the project web site, [www.greenways.com/chimneyrock](http://www.greenways.com/chimneyrock). The site featured a download page where project information was available for public consumption: [www.greenways.com/chimneyrock\\_download.html](http://www.greenways.com/chimneyrock_download.html). Online analytical software indicates that the project download page has had more than 1,200 visits from more than 600 unique visitors.

The second opportunity for public input was held subsequent to the release of the draft master plan in November 2010. For a period of two weeks, the draft plan was made available through the project web site



*The May 2010  
Public Workshop*





*The May 2010  
Public Workshop*



for public viewing. The site provided access to each chapter of the plan and a link to the public comment form where participants could submit comments.

At the close of the public input period on December 13, 2010, there were a total of 217 online comments and 426 emails collected in response to the draft plan.

The following pages contain verbatim comments from the workshop and workshop maps, followed by charts showing the responses from both the online comment forms.

## GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE WORKSHOP

1. Keep the park fee-based to help support it
2. If the north side of Rumbling Bald cliffs and the Ghost Town cliffs were open, and there was good overnight camping, there would be climbers from all over the country camping, all year round. Those two cliffs each offer a different type of rock and are two of the finest areas in the southeast. There are already 100+ routes at each area.
3. Open all trails at Park ASAP. Word is already getting out that the park is no longer worth visiting, much less paying \$14.00 to go on only one trail.
4. Put someone from Chimney Rock on the advisory board for Chimney Rock State Park, based in Chimney Rock. Whoever put the board together has clearly missed the importance of having a resident/business owner from the Village on it.
5. Recommend put all attached comments on Lake Lure website for those unable to attend today





- (as a 'blog) with the capability to respond via email, via mail-in (print out an online form) or other communication vehicle
6. Protection of wildlife is paramount and critical to their contribution to the ecology and environment. Thorough plans on how to manage wildlife preservation and habitat will take lots of money and labor (park rangers?) waste management of park visitors plays an important part of this effort.
  7. Climber and climbing access can be seen as a low investment/low impact with a high turn-around in terms of visitation and dollars coming into the town. All climbers need is parking and a faint hard to follow trail in addition to access. This area is already a major resource but largely untapped. If climbing was open on the north face of Rumbling Bald "Ghost Town" cliffs across from Chimney Rock proper, and all of the state park, it would elevate Lake Lure to a national climbing destination. If you look at the Red River Gorge in Kentucky, climbing access has had a major economic impact to the area - visit 'Miguels' any day of the year and you will be sold. Thank you.
  8. No exit road in Lake Lure from the park. Leave it in Chimney Rock.
  9. Please add mountain biking trails for all to use. SORBA (Southern Off Road Biking Association) will help!
  10. Alternative 2 and 3 best support opportunities for human powered recreation. CRSP has one of the greatest densities of mountain recreation opportunities in the state park system if not the state as a whole (considering NPS and USES lands). Recreational rock climbing opportunities at Rumbling Bald have been bolstered by recent purchase of private lands that will be transferred to the park in the future. There is further potential for this model to forward park development, granted human powered recreation gains precedence as low impact acceptable use. Thanks.
  11. There is no need for a visitor center inside the existing park. Nor on top of the orchard. Totally not needed. The money that would be used to build roads and the infrastructure can be used to open up the Skyline and Cliff trails. That's what makes Chimney Rock State Park one of America's top scenic attractions - the trail system.
  12. The suggestion for a visitor center across new bridge on street sounds good. That would give all visitors a visible place to get correct, informative information about what the park offers. Alas, to open the Bottomless Pools would give the public access to beautiful, scenic areas without a lot of hiking. The seniors would like this. The old bridge could be covered and landscaped around it. Making a beautiful, working, bike trail.
  13. World's Edge should be limited to foot traffic - no four wheelers or motorcycles. It should be possible to get permits to hike and explore areas of limited and guided public access.
  14. Addition of the Weed Patch Mountain tract would enhance park access, areas for mountain biking, and primitive camping. The tract is currently owned by Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy.
  15. Open the two upper trails ASAP. They are iconic and striking. Consider restrictions on young children. Consider connecting to Six Summits Trail and CRSP trails to Upper Hickory Nut Gorge trails currently in planning stage.
  16. Greater things since the dam went up. Word of caution is...please be aware of the fragile parts of World's Edge tract. Lots of water and lots of special plants, trees, wildlife. Area should be limited to foot traffic and daily access only.
  17. Surprised to NOT see Weed Patch Mountain as part of overall plan.
  18. Due to terrain, accessibility and locations of park access areas, the environmental/visitor center should be located outside the park as shown in Alternative #1.
  19. We NEED horse riding access!!
  20. We do not need trail biking\* anywhere in the currently existing study area. Maybe in the

Weed Patch Mountain area, should that become available. Remember that noise is also an environmental impact. \*Assuming that you mean motorized mountain bikes. Pedal trail bikes would be less objectionable but still not desirable.

21. The rock climbing is some of the best in the state and should be allowed. Climbers are a viable user group and have shown their dedication by purchasing property. We are willing to hike to the outcrops. All we need is a place to park.
22. It would be nice to have a place to camp when I visit the area. My wife and children enjoy camping and this would be a great place to come visit for the weekend instead of for the day.
23. Climbers would provide an economic impact in the off season. The best time to climb is in the winter.
24. Please consider commuter bike trails/ways that can be used as an alternative to vehicle transportation from one side of the park to the other. For example, a bike path along the ingress/egress routes (paved/gravel). This could be an attraction for families. It would also reduce vehicle congestion through town.
25. The entire area should be off-limits for motor bikes!!
26. Reduce pollution at the top by using buses or tram from entrance.
27. Open trails to Hickory Nut Falls! All trails -please!
28. The plan needs to incorporate the Lake Lure summits trail, connecting the heights and ridgelines above Lake Lure that is in planning stage
29. Greenways and hiker-biker trails as well as equestrian trails should be utilized to connect entrances in all four counties and give more access to visitors....involve local county commissioners to get improved satellite access points on outlying trails. Occasional shelters should be available similar to those on the Blue Ridge. Parkway trails, near scenic vistas....volunteers from said counties could be organized to help maintain said greenways similar to Dupont State Forest...trail to internal falls, pool creek falls, wolf creek falls
30. Please contact Philip Byers with LLCA-CFA for tie to new school, special education programs, etc.
31. Please contact Chris Braund, Lake Lure Town Manager about proposed summit trail system - very important to town and school.
32. No RV's, tent camping only, no motorcycles, ATV's, etc. Please enforce NO loud noise in or near park.
33. All the development is fine, do it, but DO NOT sacrifice the uniquely special things that has already made Chimney Rock special for decades like Skyline Trail, Cliff Trail, and Needles Eye! Reopening these trails is possible, they are already there, and should forever be a part of the Chimney Rock system. We love them and want them back!
34. I would like the exit to remain where it is. This brings visitors revenue to Chimney Rock Village which survives on Chimney Rock visitors, tourism, and local business.

## MAPPING COMMENTS FROM THE WORKSHOP

During the public workshop, participants were invited to write their comments directly on the maps for the three alternatives. Below are the comments that were provided, listed by alternative and by section of the park.

### ALTERNATIVE 1: CONSERVATION-FOCUSED PARK

#### ALTERNATIVE 1 GENERAL COMMENTS

1. Although I would benefit financially from more people traffic in the area, I would prefer instead Alternative 1 with minimal further impact to the environment, especially including any further noise pollution and impact to wildlife!
2. We think the entry and exit roads should remain because they work great already. This creates less disturbance and an alternative to extra roads and parking lots in the park.





3. I like this alternative best, however, we do need MORE low and high impact activities. The perfect solution would be a blend of all three, leaving the entrance/exit road where it is. Chimney Rock Village depends on the visibility and tourism.
4. The majority of NC people would have opposed the purchase of Chimney Rock with tax funds if they knew the best trail would be closed.

#### ALTERNATIVE 1 MAP COMMENTS - OPEN ENDED

HNG has been lacking access to good recreational opportunities for years. When the state park was announced, it was hoped that recreational opportunities would be provided within the park. The landscape of the gorge, however, with its nationally significant lands encompassing the majority of the gorge, make providing recreation very difficult, unsafe, and not smart from a conservation standpoint. A much more logical scenario would be to limit the access to all the nationally significant lands, and instead expand the study area to include lands to the north and possibly west, which are less valuable biologically, but infinitely more usable recreationally. Couple that with the fact that a major access off of Buffalo Creek would not require expensive road building, would spread traffic out a third direction, and is only 20 minutes from I-40. This would create outstanding hiking and mountain biking opportunities on more usable land. The view from Grey Rock would provide astounding views of the gorge without disturbing homeowners as the view from Eagle Rock does. The existing study area should be expanded greatly to allow for these possibilities. In addition, with the historic use of many areas of the gorge, if good recreational opportunities are not provided, the truly biologically important areas will continue to be abused. Providing accessible areas to hike and bike would result in the protection of the areas that are critical biologically.

The addition of Weed Patch Mountain tract (1200-1300 acres) would be a great addition. The perfect venue for hiking, mountain biking, primitive camping. In the hands of CMLC currently.

Connection of CRSP trails with Six Summits Trail and the planned upper Hickory Nut Gorge and Bearwallow trails would be very smart indeed.

Connect to regional trails - Six Summit Trail (Rumbling Bald Area) and Hickory Nut Gorge system

#### ALTERNATIVE 1 MAP COMMENTS - NORTH RUMBLING BALD, KING TRACT

1. the proposed summit trail is very important for hiking and biking
2. Where is Weed Patch Mountain?
3. Town of Lake Lure owns property east of King Tract. Should look into possibility for a day use area, connection
4. the Rumbling Bald Resort is aka Fairfield and is a gated community. But trails connecting to here would be nice.
5. There should be a trail that spurs from the Rumbling Bald ridge and connects to the Town-owned property east of King Tract.
6. There might be an existing trail that connects Shumont Mountain to Boys Camp Road.
7. Expand climbing area north of Rumbling Bald! 20 year history of use!
8. 20 years of rock climbing at north Rumbling Bald
9. Open climbing access at north Rumbling Bald

## ALTERNATIVE 1 MAP COMMENTS - SOUTH RUMBLING BALD

10. Long history of rock climbing here
11. Expand existing Rumbling Bald climbing day use area
12. Provide access to Rumbling Bald at Blue Heron Point

## ALTERNATIVE MAP COMMENTS - BOYS CAMP ROAD, BOTTOMLESS POOLS NEAR PROPOSED VISITOR CENTER

13. Where the existing bridge crosses Lake Lure, make a covered bridge for bike/ped. New bridge being installed can be used for vehicular access.
14. Visitor center would be good at the proposed location. Easily accessible for all - keep moving for path on things to do.
15. Great site for visitor center.
16. Visitor center should be located here due to terrain and environmental concerns and allow land for park use IN THE PARK!
17. This is the best location for the visitor center.
18. I agree that the visitor center here would be a good location, but the site drains very poorly and site would cost money when there is already owned land to build upon. Let's use what we have already.
19. I agree! Let's open Bottomless Pools! (2 others agree)

## ALTERNATIVE MAP COMMENTS - WORLD'S EDGE

20. People are hand gliding and doing other unauthorized recreational activities off World's Edge.
21. Double check the status if the roads south of World's Edge. Some of these roads are unpaved and the maps are showing them paved. Also, many stretched of these roads have not been used or improved in 40 years.

## ALTERNATIVE MAP COMMENTS - CHIMNEY ROCK PROPER & ROUND TOP MOUNTAIN

22. Rock climbing and hiking at Ghost Rock
23. I miss the Skyline and Cliff trails!
24. Reopening the Skyline/Cliff trail is crucial to Chimney Rock State Park! (3 additional "I agree" comments)
25. Please open up both trails
26. Could rework the Skyline Trail with access to some features, but Cliff Trail is a one-of-a-kind experience. Must do!
27. [Arrow pointing to the proposed trail crossing Hickory Nut Falls] This trail should go closer to the top of the falls.
28. [Arrow pointing to area between Rocky Broad River and Chimney Rock entry road] No development here. Preserve homes.

## ALTERNATIVE 2: LOW IMPACT PARK

### ALTERNATIVE 2 GENERAL COMMENTS

1. I favor this alternative. Foot trails, backcountry camping, especially at Orchards, more trails to the SE of the Rock might be good.
2. Mountain bike trails are less impact than any other. Create business opportunities for MTB service/rental. 10 miles of MTB trail is small. More interest volunteer work if trail system for MTB if larger. Because of access issues, one-way, well signed MTB trails would be safer and



used more frequently.

3. Proposed exit road needs to account for existing local visitors (it would remove them away from downtown Chimney Rock). Visitors currently come back downtown and shop after visiting the park. An exit road would be very expensive. If rock climbing is expanded, take into account emergency services and management.
4. Fix the road and leave it alone (up to the Rock). Please open both closed trails.
5. If rock climbing access is expanded - Lake Lure will become a major climbing destination in the SE, boosting visitation. Climbers do not need much in terms of development - only access and legal parking - services/management are in minimal need.
6. Proposed new exit road is BAD for businesses in Chimney Rock

## ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - OPEN-ENDED

Reopen trail to top of falls!

No four wheeling! [two other "I agree!"]

Would LOVE mountain bike trails!

Weed Patch Mountain has more valuable area for hiking and mountain biking, ~1600 acres not in the proposed area

Park should partner with local equestrian groups for horse back activities

Equestrian Trails! [additional "Ditto!"]

Historic interpretation for 'Frontier Community' that lived on top of Chimney Rock Mountain (ask T.C. Huntly, local resident)

Market the Park for economic development [comment: Ditto!]

Add management as you add camping and hiking facilities

Great views! [at Stony Mountain]

Park entry fee deters visitors! [and] No Way!

## ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - NORTH RUMBLING BALD, KING TRACT

1. [At extreme north end]: Trail needed here to link with LL Town Park, part of Weed Patch Mountain, CMLC Tract

2. [Pointing at Eagle Rock]: Fantastic to see mountain bike access!

3. [Near Eagle Rock]: Residents live here. There will be access and parking issues/conflict near proposed Shumont Mountain trailhead. Please move trail away from houses in this area.

4. [Pointing to area east of King Tract]: Stacked loop system with all difficulties

5. Need a minimum of 8-10 miles of MTB trails!

6. [Referring to north side of Rumbling Bald]: MTB one way shuttle trail downhill MTB access just like Paris Mtn., Bend OR, and others.

MAP COMMENTS - North Rumbling Bald, King Tract (cont'd)

7. [Following comments refer to eastern ridge of Rumbling Bald]: Best climbing along here/Long history of rock climbing here/Climbing are with long history!/Allow MTB access!

## ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - SOUTH RUMBLING BALD

8. [Referring to existing Day Use Area]: Long history of climbing here/Expand!/Rock climbing here

9. [Referring to proposed Rumbling Bald Day Use Area]: Great to have mountain bike parking here

## ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - SHUMONT AND ROUND TOP MOUNTAIN

10. [Referring to Shumont Mountain Day Use Area]: If you open this as an access make it secure secure and manage use for safety, etc....and noise, trash, cleanup, etc. gate at night to prevent loitering and parking

- 11. [Referring to existing roadway leading up to Shumont Day Use Area]: This road is in unsafe condition
- 12. [South side of Round Top Mountain]: Open climbing access/Best climbing here!/Climbing area with a long history!/Trail to connect north and south portions of park/Connect with hiking trails?

#### ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - CENTRAL CHIMNEY ROCK SP

- 13. Free foot access from Chimney Rock?
- 14. [Referring to proposed egress road]: Could be confusing for park users/This road needed/Alternative route (from existing offices east of Meadows)/This roadway directs visitors away from the majority of local business. This is something that visitors and tourists look for on vacation.
- 15. [Referring to hiking trail from Meadows]: Would love a hiking trail connection into Lake Lure town center, lake
- 16. [Referring to existing roadway ---]: This road would need major costly improvement to make usable
- 17. [Near proposed visitor center at the Meadows]: I like the concept of free access to the hiking trails and a hub of information in the Meadows.
- 18. [Near proposed visitor center at the Meadows]: Need to think through other current uses of Meadows for shoulder season events, etc.
- 19. Reopen Cliff trail, very historic and dramatic and low impact!
- 20. Reopen Skyline Trail! /[Additional (3)] "Yes!"
- 21. As a local business owner, this has been a top request/desire. Especially Cliff Trail as it is most photogenic.
- 22. [North side of Chimney Rock]: Last of the Mohicans here! Open these trails!
- 23. [North side of Chimney Rock]: Open climbing access!
- 24. Great, trails on top of Chimney Rock!

#### ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - BOTTOMLESS POOLS

- 25. Make this area accessible ASAP!!
- 26. This would make great drive-in camping, campers could easily access the beach at Lake Lure and Restaurants
- 27. Create a 3-5 mile loop hiking trail NEAR TOWN to attract day hikers into the downtown Lake Lure commercial area
- 28. [Referring to east trails at Bottomless Pools]: Convert with Summits Trail around Lake Lure and to new school site
- 29. Definitely need primitive camping

#### ALTERNATIVE 2 MAP COMMENTS - WORLD'S EDGE

- 30. Sugarloaf roadbed GREAT MTB access - shallow grade, virtually no erosion issues, great MTB loops
- 31. Link access to Polk County and Green River
- 32. [West side of World's Edge]: Develop tent and trailer camping in this area
- 33. Provide access for MTB
- 34. Partying, littering, and dumping problems reported at World's Edge

#### ALTERNATIVE 3: INTENSIVE RECREATION PARK

##### ALTERNATIVE 3 GENERAL COMMENTS

- 1. Open all of Chimney Rock area to rock climbing, open and establish access to "ghost town" area and north face of Rumbling Bald - it would boost Lake Lure to a MAJOR national climbing





destination.

2. Please open both upper trails in existing park. Buy Bottomless Pools and Boulders track.
3. 2 existing trails should be reopened. No RV's, ATV's, motorcycles...there is already too much noise pollution! Open trails soon!
4. Proposed road to orchard is a bad idea - would create a gash through the park
5. Proposed road to orchards is poor utilization of resources (cost)
6. Entrance fee is too high for some visitors; could we allow people to enter PART of the park for free (visitor center, information center)?
7. Add camping (regulated of course), maybe a cable car ride to the top

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - OPEN-ENDED

- Incorporate mass transit
- Accommodate traffic
- More mountain biking. SORBA can help with maintenance.
- Inspiration Point trail? Top of Falls
- Where is RV camping?
- Please check ROW area near World's Edge for McGraw family
- Visitor center in Lake Lure
- Open up old closed trails to top
- Equestrian access??
- Girl Scout camp for sale
- Regional airport
- 8-mile town trail tie-in will tie in with everything
- Parking deck in Lake Lure, walk to park off Boys Camp Rd.
- Buy Bottomless Pools and open
- Windmills for electricity
- Conference center/hotel like Stone Mountain State Park GA
- Add low impact shelters for spot thunderstorms with break-out first aid kits
- Coordinate with county commissioners to provide access points into the park (partner for funding at trailheads)
- Access for mountain bikers at World's Edge would be great
- [Near Bottomless Pools]: Gateway trailhead parking/visitor center (small) align with Town planning
- Limited Access Areas - provide guided tours with botanist or biologist with limited access for naturalists and those interested in native species and flora and fauna

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - RUMBLING BALD

8. Provide access to Lake Lure Summits Trail Here [north of King Tract]
  9. Rumbling Bald Resort okay and welcomes public access point
  10. Excellent ridge top hiking trail
- MAP COMMENTS - Rumbling Bald (cont'd)
11. Existing north side climbing areas 20 year history
  12. Fantastic climbing here, 100+ routes
  13. Great climbing need access
  14. More climbing than shown! Long history! Regionally significant area!
  15. Don't close ridge trail!
  16. Trails should not go right by houses - align away from houses [near Eagle Rock]
  17. Concern for safety on Shumont Rd. - increased tourism could cause problems; if there is an accident for example

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - ROUND TOP MOUNTAIN AND BOYS CAMP RD.

- 18. [At south side of Round Top Mountain]: Environmental issues with existing developer - sink holes/drainage ponds - road is deteriorating
- 19. Ghost Town climbing area - 20 year history!
- 20. Please open [area around Round Top Mountain]/keep open to climbing
- 21. Fantastic climbing here, 100+ routes
- 22. Consider connecting trail and backcountry camping
- 23. Trailhead access to RB trail good idea [RE: proposed RB day use area]
- 24. Buy this Old Silver City [SW Round Top Mtn]

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - CENTRAL CHIMNEY ROCK

- 25. Reopen Skyline and Cliff Trails!/Yes!/A Must!/Yes yes yes!/I agree 100% AND SOON!
- 26. Offer golf cart shuttle to bottom of falls
- 27. [Egress Road]: Alternative shown on map
- 28. Just buy Hickory Nut Falls Family Campground

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - THE ORCHARDS

- 29. Too hot for visitor area
- 30. Camping will increase the risk to this area!
- 31. No RV's!
- 32. Occasional shelter on greenway connection, Sugarloaf with Chimney Rock!
- 33. Do not allow camping at all!!
- 34. CRP needs a Grand Lodge similar to those at Yosemite/No, please don't!/No
- 35. Do both roads to the top!

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - PROPOSED ENTRY ROAD

- 36. Bad Idea!
- 37. Will destroy nationally significant land
- 38. Road is bad idea. PRIVATE PROPERTY.
- 39. Inappropriate. Very poor idea.
- 40. This is a costly and unattractive option. Not worth the expense.
- 41. Good for fire fighting but \$\$\$

### ALTERNATIVE 3 MAP COMMENTS - SUGARLOAF MOUNTAIN, POOL CREEK

- 42. Internal falls path/trail to view inner falls
- 43. Need evacuation at all camping areas!
- 44. Good beginner group rock climbing area. Spread climbers out = reduced impact!
- 45. Look into existing Jeep trail for access
- 46. Possible access for Henderson County site at Sugarloaf Mtn.
- 47. Cloven Cliffs existing rock climbing area (20 year history)
- 48. Possible equestrian staging area of county road 1706

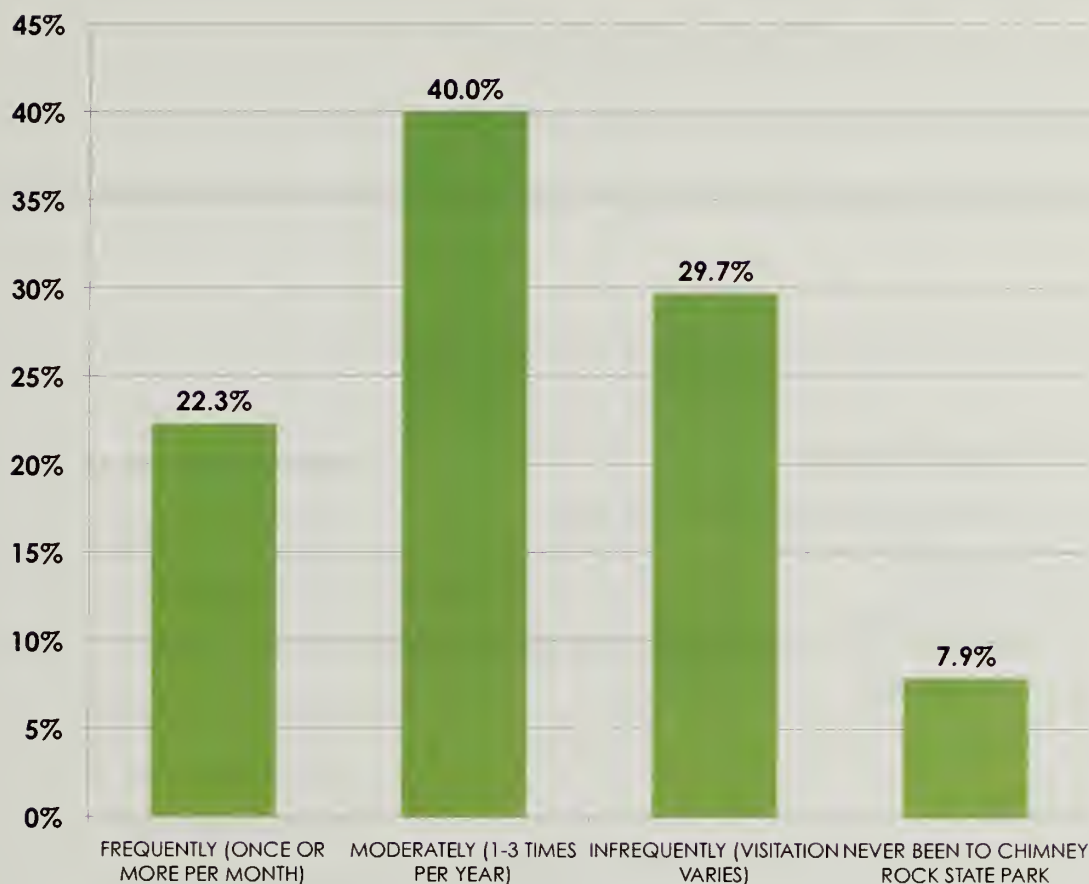




## PUBLIC COMMENT FORM #1 RESULTS

The first Chimney Rock State Park public comment form was designed to solicit input on a series of questions relevant to park visitation, programming, and planning. The responses to each question are tallied in the following charts. A total of 586 responses were recorded.

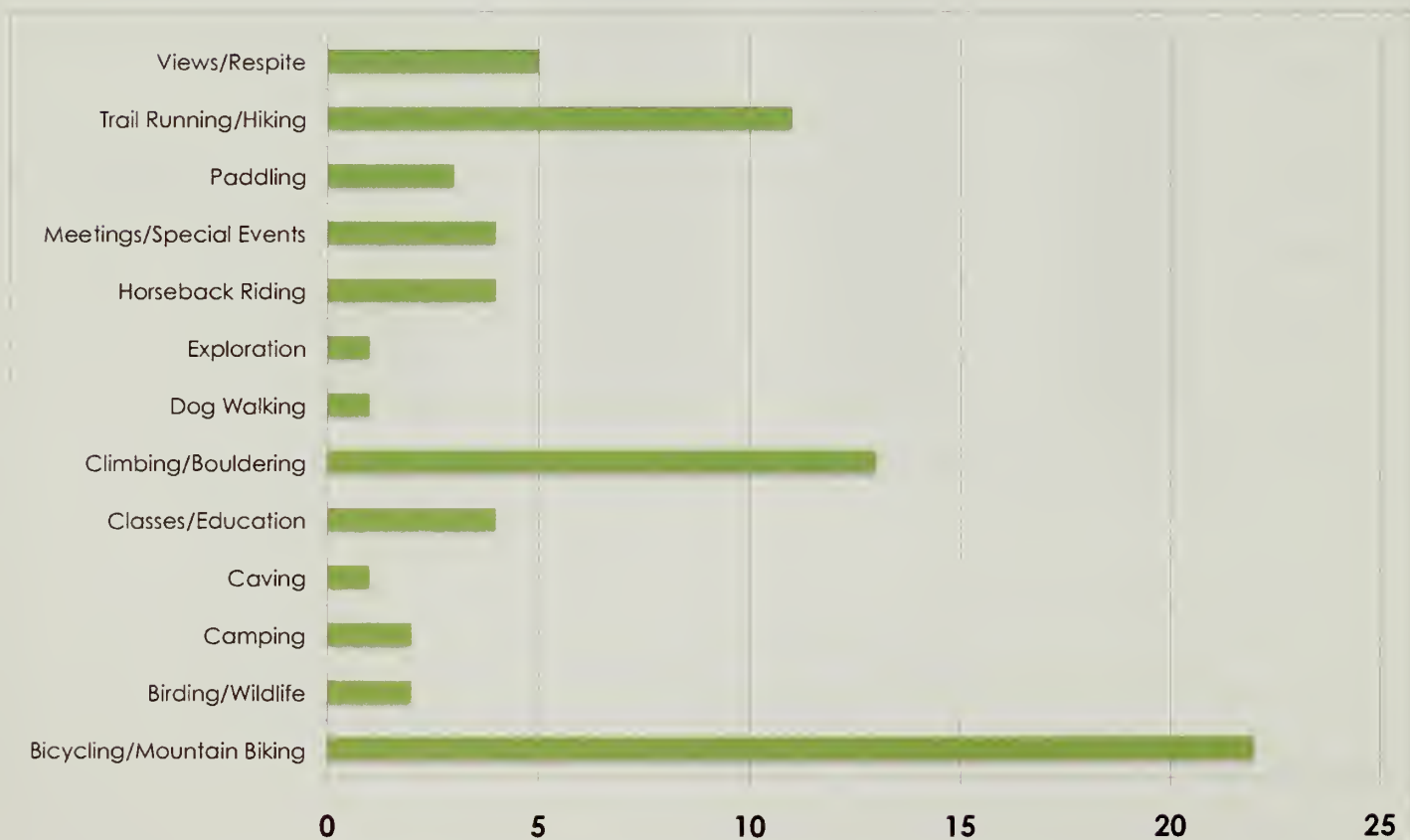
### QUESTION 1: HOW OFTEN DO YOU CURRENTLY VISIT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK?



## QUESTION 2: WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN WHEN YOU VISIT THE PARK?

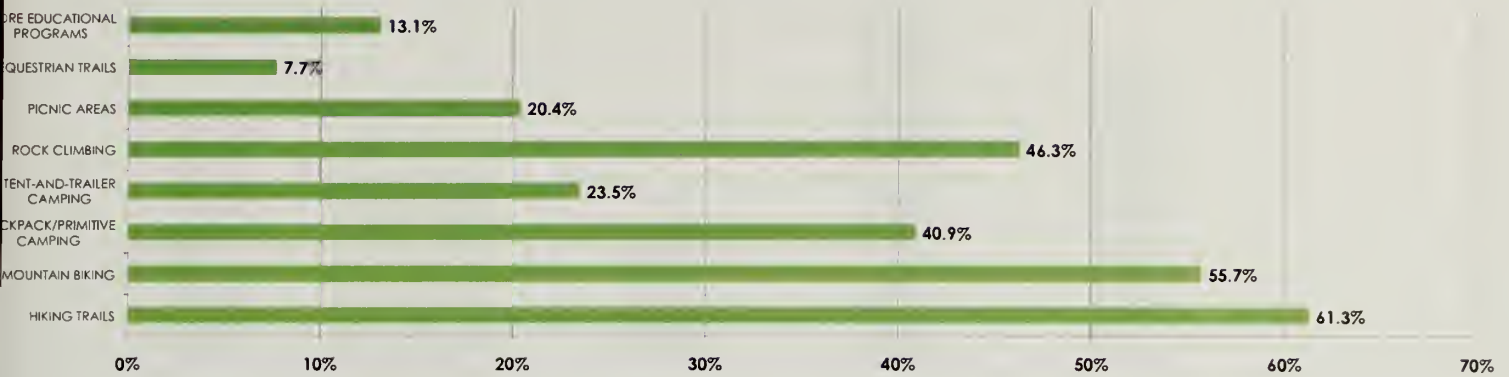


## QUESTION 2 - SPECIFIC RESPONSES\* TO "OTHER":





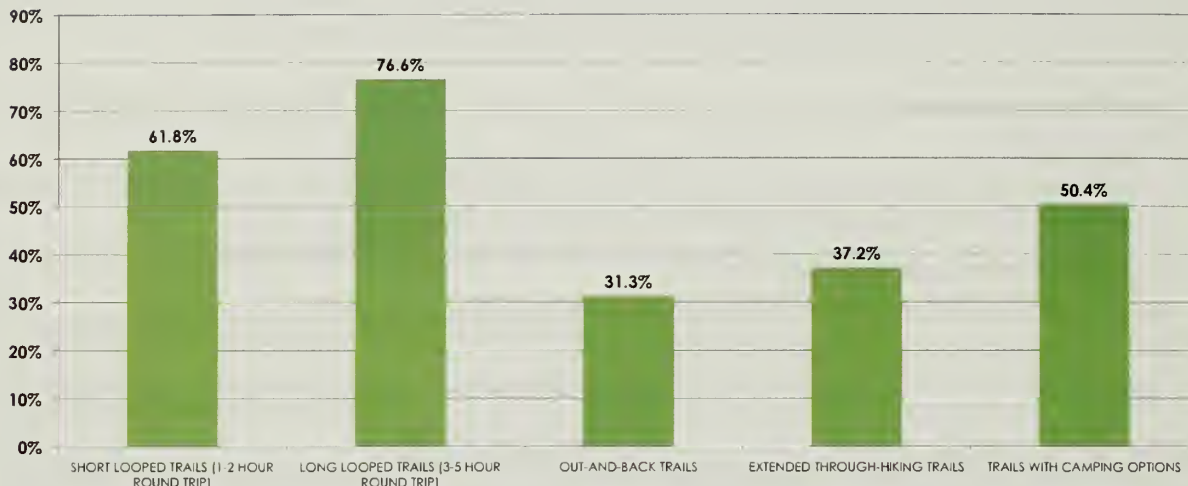
### QUESTION 3: WHAT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN MORE FREQUENTLY AT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK?



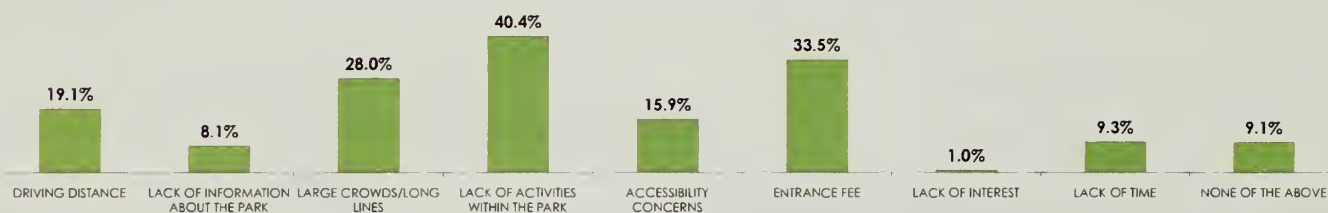
### QUESTION 3 - SPECIFIC RESPONSES\* TO "OTHER":



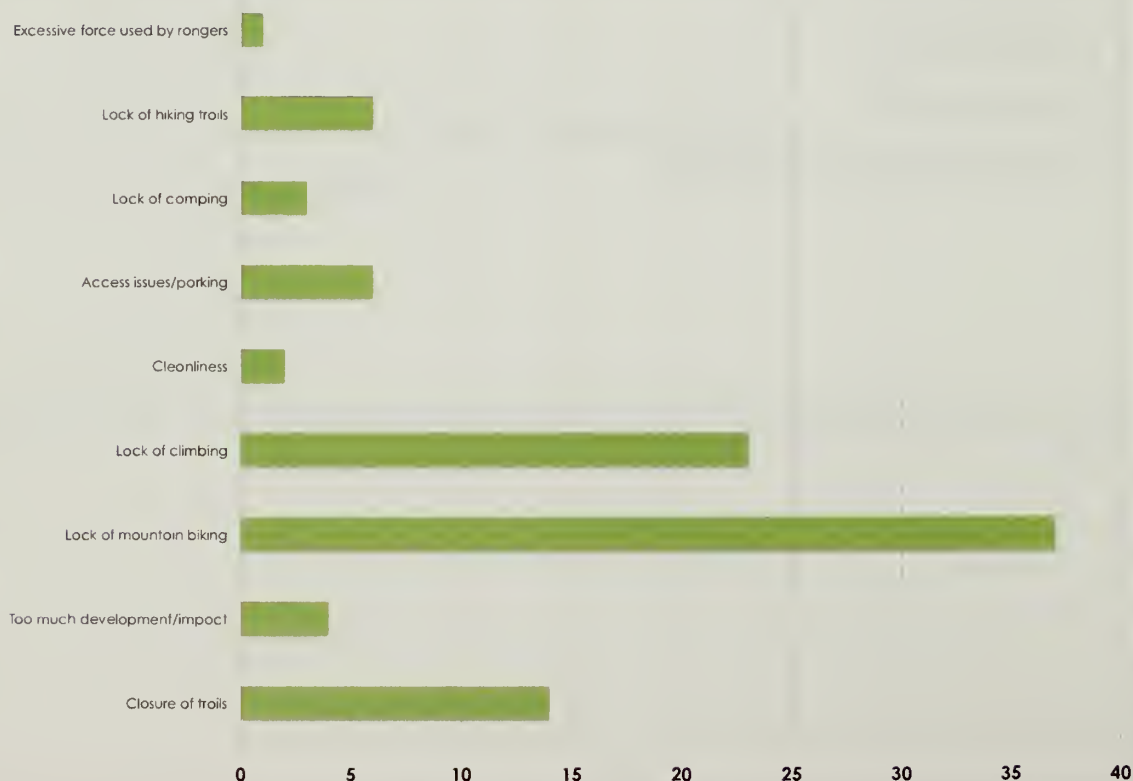
#### QUESTION 4: IF YOU INCLUDED "HIKING TRAILS" IN YOUR RESPONSE TO QUESTION 3, PLEASE SPECIFY THE TYPES OF TRAILS YOU PREFER.



#### QUESTION 5: WHAT, (IF ANY) ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTORS THAT MIGHT PREVENT YOU FROM VISITING CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK?



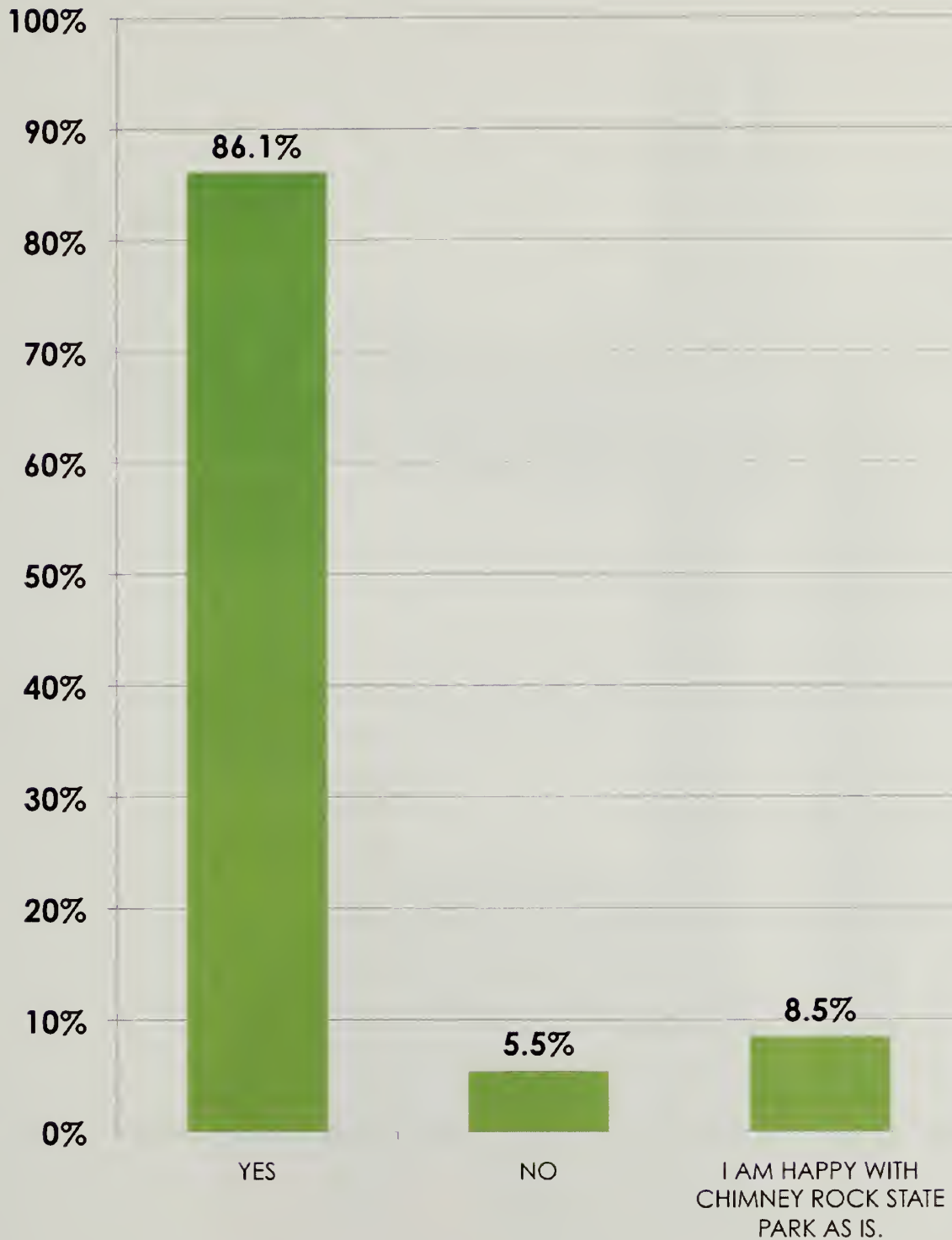
#### QUESTION 5 - SPECIFIC RESPONSES\* TO "OTHER":



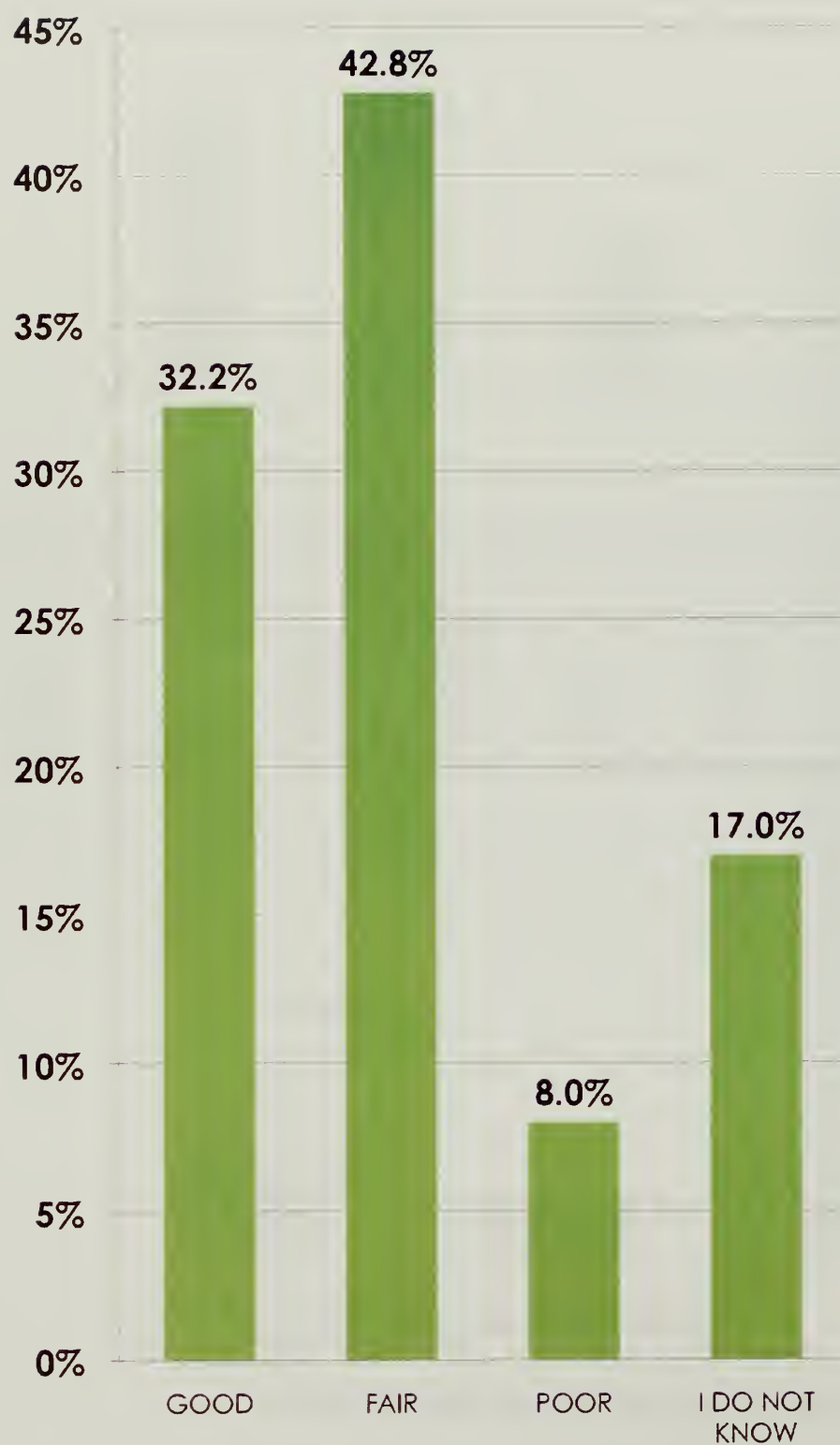




**QUESTION 6: WOULD YOU VISIT CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK MORE OFTEN IF THERE WERE MORE DAY USE AREAS, TRAIL FACILITIES, AND ACCESSIBLE TRAILHEADS?**

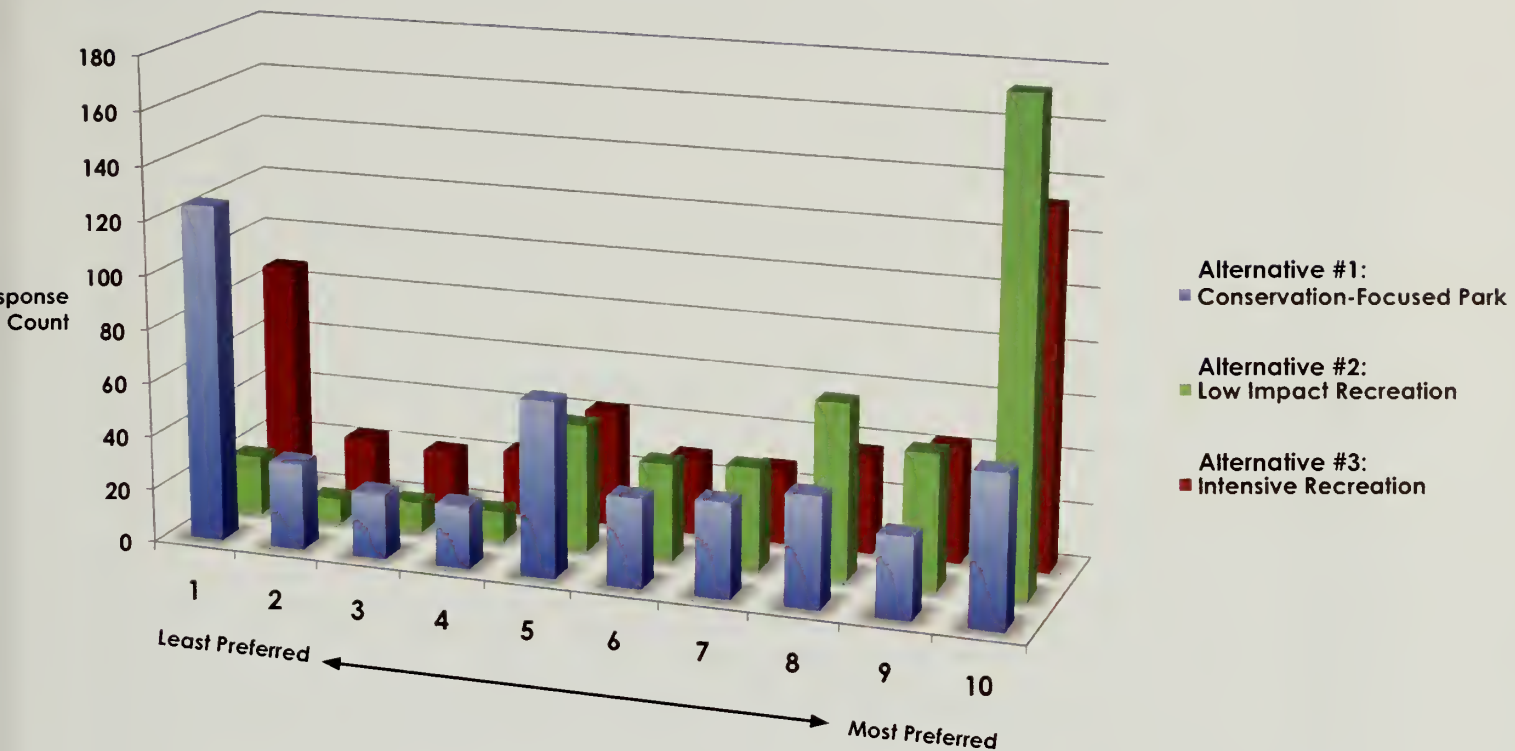


QUESTION 7: HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK?

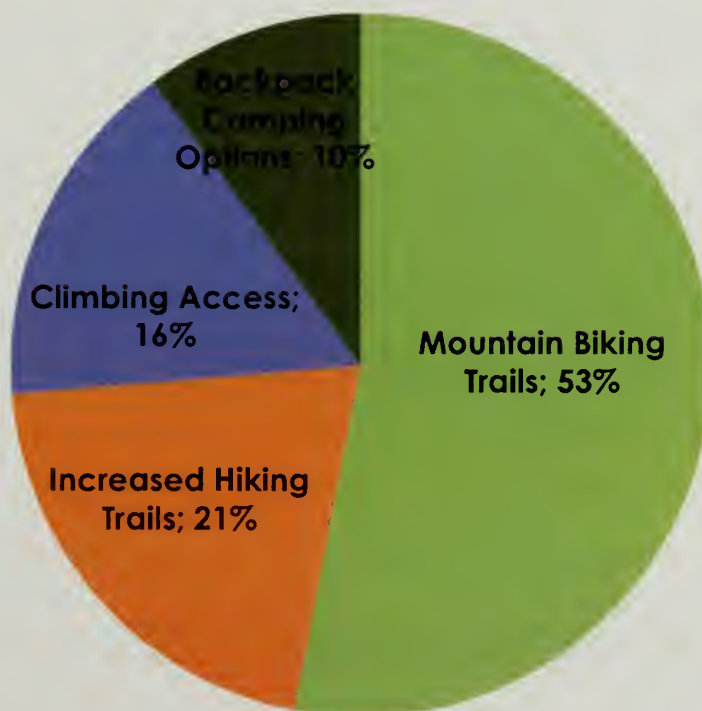




QUESTION 8: PLEASE RATE THE ALTERNATIVES [OUTLINED IN CHAPTER 8], FROM ONE TO TEN, TEN BEING YOUR PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE.



QUESTION 9 (OPEN-ENDED): FOR YOUR MOST PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, WHAT ELEMENTS DO YOU LIKE BEST? (graph shows top results, individual responses are listed on the following pages)



## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

1	More access to more people.
2	"Low impact" model fits this area a lot better than a more intensive and invasive park development.
3	#3 - It allows access to World's Edge and more day use area in the Rumbling Bald area
4	1. rock climbing 2. Mountain biking 3. hiking
5	10 miles of mountain bike trails
6	10 miles of mtn bike trail
7	A combination of conservation and access for recreation.
8	A good mix of recreation and conservation.
9	A Mountain bike section!
10	A nice mix of access to enjoy the natural beauty w/out having the large influx of RV's and cars (like the main roads of the Smokies). Nice use of use areas and trails to traverse the park. With the natural rock available, it could have a nice comparison with Linville.
11	Access for mountain biking
12	Access Opportunity...
13	access to activities like mountain biking, camping, and hiking.
14	Access to climbing and hiking resources that are maintained through a combined effort of park staff and non-profit interest groups
15	Access to mountain biking.
16	Access to new terrain within the park
17	Access to rock climbing
18	Access to rock climbing
19	Access to Rumbling Bald, and not building a visitor center there.
20	Access to the area and the attractions without the excessive overhead of expensive facilities.
21	Access to the existing climbing & improved access to the areas that have been climbed but not fully utilized. I believe creating access to all of the climbing will reduce impact by spreading out the climbing community.
22	access to the park from different ends and the horse trails
23	Access to the varied geological formations and Falls, ability to add new activities such as BPing/camping, biking - but they need to be in new areas - not in the existing park. It would ruin it.
24	accessibility, ability to visit with short time horizon
25	achieves a balance of recreation and conservation.
26	Activities for all
27	Activities offered, particularly mountain biking and primitive camping while maintaining natural integrity of the park.
28	Added trails and additional educational options.
29	Adding biking trail
30	Addition of mountain bike trails.
31	Additional 6 acre short trails connection to out of park trails
32	additional hiking trails and improved access to areas currently underutilized; more day use facilities, campgrounds, etc. to disperse use
33	After hearing from the consultant staff at the 5/26 event, I formed the impression that a more-intensive form of development has significant pluses. By creating a new visitor center, pressure could be taken on the area that has been the center of the private park -- and that area could still have entry well controlled so as to prevent undue wear & tear.
34	All the hiking options and trailheads
35	allows biking without too much development
36	an abundance of trails, but not the overuse of "Day Use" area and street access.
37	As a local resident(within 10 miles of the park) I would like to visit 2-3 times per week to walk, jog, hike or mountain bike.
38	Availability of primitive camping options that will allow access without too much hiking.
39	Balance between conservation and recreation
40	balance of use without visibility being prominent
41	Because mountain biking is compatible with the prescription for that model just like hiking and rock climbing are. Mountain biking is a low impact (and quiet) human powered recreation form that has similar impacts compared with hiking; it is not diametrically opposed to conservation values.
42	Being in the woods
43	Better access
44	Better access to great existing rock climbing routes. Camping areas.
45	BIKING
46	Biking options, conservation.
47	biking trails
48	Biking trails
49	Blend of more recreation (mountain biking in particular) while maintaining low impact development
50	Bottomless pools-I've never seen them. Another parking area at RB? You didn't make it clear.
51	camping, trail network
52	Camping and access to The Bottomless Pools
53	Camping and climbing access





## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

54	Camping sites if primitive.
55	Car-camping options and the parking structure.
56	Climbing
57	climbing
58	climbing & hiking
59	Climbing access
60	compromise, leave no trace ethic is imperative
61	Conservation of nature
62	conserving the environment
63	Construction of mountain bike trails
64	Continued access to climbing at Rumbling Bald, hopefully gaining access to the routes on the North Side. Minimal destruction of the forest for parking etc...
65	day hikes between camping areas
66	Day use areas, increased parking. It balances conservation and recreation and makes use of existing day-use areas and creates some new ones.
67	dispersed parking with restrooms, more primitive camping options
68	Entrance at World's Edge
69	Environmental preservation, accommodation of varying hiking skills, multiple day use areas, multiple access points
70	Every proposed day use parking area in the plan is well needed. These parking areas will provide access to the extensive trail network that is already there and will be added to or changed by this plan. Also all the proposed camping/rv areas will be well recieved. Especially all of the proposed primitive camping areas.
71	expanded access to park areas, expanded access to camping opportunities, expanded access to future rock climbing activities
72	Expanded recreational activities of rock climbing and mountain biking without extensive development of the park.
73	Extensive recreation. I like ot have beautiful places to pitch a tent and lightly tread on trails (rather than carving my own trails..)
74	Extensive trail networks that access the cliffs of Rumbling Bald, both the regular south face, and the north face.
75	Extensive use encournages me to visit more and provides more options to spend the day. I like the mountain biking trail.
76	Facilities for moderate recreation.
77	Focus on conservation
78	Good balance of use and minimum change to land.
79	Greater access to recreation
80	have not yet been
81	Having educational destinations, places to reflect upon nature and the astonishing unique ecology of the Hickory Nut Gorge. Let's raise awareness about land stewardship and our collective responsibilities.
82	hiking
83	Hiking
84	Hiking and rock climbing access
85	hiking trails to prominent vistas in the park, protection of the biologically significant areas of the park -- ie prevention of climbing on pristine rocks in the park -- limiting the climbing to Rumbling Bald South only to prevent further devastaion of rock faces and sensitive plant life.
86	hiking trails, interpretive enviornmental education center,
87	hiking trails. visitor center in town. no new roads
88	hiking trails. primitive usage.
89	hiking trails/ restroom
90	hiking, camping, backpacking
91	I prefer the mtb options of the second two alternatives
92	I am a rock climber and boulderer that visits Rumbling Bald about once a week or so in the fall-spring months, so my main concern is access to existing climbing areas in the tract, along with opening up more climbing areas. This has become a world class climbing destination and could bring a ton of revenue into the immediate area if advertised as such. With that being said, in order to maximize the use and minimize the impact, more climbing areas need to be maintained and opened. Ghost Town along with the North side of Rumbling Bald are only a few of the already developed areas that should be a priority to disperse the concentration of climbers at the main cliff band and boulders at the Bald. I also like the idea of having plenty of camping so climbers wont have to leave the park for lodging. A designated "climbers campground" with a small convenience shop would produce a great amount of income for the park and prove that the Bald is NC's top winter climbing destination!!!
93	I appreciate the added development of hiking and mountain biking trails in the Low Impact Recreation plan. I also appreciate the lower level of development as opposed to the Intensive Recreation plan.
94	I appreciate the compromise between making existing day-use activities (such as rock climbing) more convenient and 'organized' while also reserving some areas of the park for more remote hiking and camping experiences and limited adverse impact to the environment. In particular, I like the addition of day-use facilities in the area of Rumbling Bald Mountain to facilitate rock climbing in the area.
95	I backpack and prefer less people, but realize even if the intensive alternate is considered, many will not walk the distance in to the camp sites.

## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

96	I believe that conservation focused park is the smartest for maintaining the resource. I am a climber and I see no access to climbing in this plan. Why? This area is a great resource, and it should be shared with the people who can be utilize it's most prominent resource. This area would require fixed anchors in order to climb safely due to its lack of crack for artificial gear.
97	I cannot read the plan on-line. I like the idea of keeping the park natural, conservation-focused, with minimal impact to the land.
98	I could not see enough on my computer to vote on these, I will attend the meeting tonight to see. I love the park in general and love what you have done so far. Thank you.
99	I do like the restoration of the Bottomless Pools area.
100	I don't want to see over visitation to the park, offering a more wilderness experience.
101	I don't have time to study the differences between these three alternatives, but I am in support of additional trails and ESPECIALLY improved access to climbing. Climbing is the most unique aspect of the park and this area is VERY important to the rock climbing community.
102	I feel that low impact recreation still allows motor vehicle based tourism to access the park, but does not overrun the upper areas such as the Orchards with more parking and access.
103	I like having the bottomless falls open and more hiking trails available.
104	I like intensive rec activities, mountain biking and such
105	I like that the orchards will not be intensively developed. That climbing access will remain. Also, I think it is important not to over develop the park so that it can be enjoyed and appreciated as a quiet retreat; a place to be with nature not hordes of people.
106	I like that the parking area at Rumbling Bald will be improved.
107	I like that the Rumbling Bald area has been given attention... I would also like to see that Round Top area become an attraction as well. Specifically, for Rock Climbers this area is known as Ghost Town. (If I understand the map correctly). I would like to see hiking and rock climbing access to these locations to reduce impact to Rumbling Bald. Blue Rock, is another area that would be an incredible asset for rock climbers as well. And by opening these areas up to rock climbers would cause such a sensation, that the Hickory Nut Gorge would be known as the Southeast's Yosemite Valley. The potential for this area is beyond the imagination, if low impact users were just allowed to enjoy themselves.
108	I like that there will be more trails than there are now and mostly that it looks like rock climbing will be available in more areas than are available now. Rock climbers are very conservation minded people who are good stewards of our rocks and land as proven by our organizations such as CCC and Access Fund who are actively conserving beautiful areas.
109	I like the additional area for mountain biking with a reasonable amount of hiking trails. I would like to see there be more access granted to climbers than just Rumbling Bald. Climbers can help build and maintain low impact trails to access the cliffs.
110	I like the balance that is struck between recreational use and conservation. This land is an incredible resource, one that needs to be protected and used wisely to ensure it continues to thrive for generations.
111	I like the education center, and a balanced amount of camping areas and hiking trails. I like the increased size of the Round Top Mountain Conservation MGMT Area in the Conservation-Focused alternative.
112	I like the expanded access to rock climbing areas and camping options.
113	I like the expansion of Rumbling Bald day usage area.
114	I like the fact that they included MTBing in 2 of the plans. I don't see why it wouldn't be in all of them. MTBing is a great recreation that allows greater access in a shorter amount of time and is also very low impact.
115	I like the higher amount of hiking alternatives, while still keeping it fairly natural.
116	I like the idea of a hub trail system for hiking, climbing, and primitive camping. Good call on permeable pavement!
117	I like the idea of a limited road, and no large trailer-camping area, or anything like that. I think a large parking area and decent access road would be best. I do think that certain low impact groups--such as backpackers, day hikers, rock climbers, and others should be given priority, since the vast majority of people who partake in these activities are conservation-minded already.
118	I like the idea of accessibility with certain areas carefully chosen and set aside for conservation.
119	I like the idea of low impact activities.
120	I like the increased accessibility mostly. The only problem I have with the current setup is the lack of parking. Also, I wouldn't mind some primitive camping (maybe a pit toilet, maybe running water, with a designated area or areas to throw a tent down). The camping would be great if it was back from the road where it would be quiet. Thanks for all your help guys! The park is great as is and could be incredible with such improvements!
121	I like the Mountain Biking Trail
122	I like the mountain biking trails.
123	I like the mountain biking trails. I also like that there is less impact and cost than the intensive plan.
124	I like the network of established trails. I think that they actually help conserve the area since it will hopefully prevent "off route" traffic. The chimney rock park trails that already exist are spectacular and I think additional well designed paths would make this an even better place to visit and ensure the town doesn't lose out during this transition from private to public management.
125	I like the open access and available parking in the intensive recreation version.
126	I like the opportunity for IMBA multi use low impact trails to be built so that I visit this beautiful area and ride my mtn. bike.
127	I like the Orchard hiking trail and the fact that this will have as little impact on existing trails as possible.
128	I like the plans for mountain biking trails. We take our family (parents 59 years old to our 4 year old) on camping trips that we can ride our bikes. This is a great low impact sport that the whole family can enjoy. Mt Bikes are also a low impact trail user and the mt bike community also gives back a lot of volunteer time to the trails we ride. I think if there were a large network of good riding trails the local community would benefit. We meet people all the time from other states that come to Dupont and Pisgah to ride on their vacations. This could help local business owners with shoulder seasons and bring more money into the local economy.



## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

129	I Like whichever alternative opens up the most climbing.
130	I love some of the hiking trails you have already
131	I love the accessibility of the cliffs at Rumbling Bald.
132	I prefer increased access to rock climbing.
133	I prefer the Intensive Recreation and Use alternative because it gives climbers access to the rock faces and it would build mountain biking trails and hiking trails with primitive camping sites along the way. The longer the trails the better.
134	I think that the intensive recreation alternative makes best use of the resources of the Hickory Nut Gorge.
135	I think that the park should focus on what it has - Nature, wild trails, low development. I do think there should be tent camping, backpacking, and lots of rock climbing options.
136	I want there to be good climbing access. Climbers are often very aware of leave no trace, so it seems it would fit with the low impact recreation. I don't want to see RVs and such around. Some back country camping would be nice.
137	I would like to see access to more rock climbing. Chimney rock is a mini version of Yosemite Valley.
138	I would like to see as much access as possible to climbing areas. Climbers, in general, are good stewards and by spreading them out over the park's excellent resources, it would limit impact. In addition, Chimney Rock has the unique opportunity to provide the ONLY public mountainbiking from Dupont to Spartanburg. This is a significant shortcoming of the area and would be a significant draw to the area. It would also provide the opportunity to develop businesses in the area such as bike shops, housing and restaurants.
139	I would like to see mountain bike trails introduced to the park. Mountain biking is a low impact sport that a lot of local people enjoy and causes very little to no damage to trail systems (when properly built trails are present and maintained in a proper fashion.) Mountain biking is also becoming a huge tourist draw for western NC.
140	I would like to see mountain biking trails added.
141	I would like to see the beauty of these mountains more accessible without destroying the environment
142	I would love to see camping available at the park or near the Rumbling bald climbing area. and as much as I want to conserve the area, bathrooms/more parking would be really nice at the rumbling bald climbing area
143	I would love to see more access to other climbing cliffs in the park, not just Rumbling Bald. There's much potential more new routes there and it would make national news if climbing would be opened up on the "other side". Also, I think including much more mountain biking opportunities would really bring people in to the area. Mountain Bikers have more money than some other user groups and they would come from afar (TN, VA, GA & even FL) to ride the trails, eat in restaurants and stay in hotel rooms and campgrounds.
144	If an area is destroyed, it doesn't matter whether people involved in recreation or in development destroyed it. The most important goal should be to preserve the few areas remaining. Minimal impact recreation is the best second choice. Preserving flora and fauna and habitat should be the top priority.
145	improved accessibility but not overwhelming
146	improved facilities
147	Increase in usage but not so invasive of the natural resources.
148	Increased accessibility to Orchards and backside of Chimney
149	Increased focus on nature, education
150	Increased number of trails and camping options.
151	Increased opportunity to mtn bike and rock climb
152	increased trail options for more variety of park users
153	increased trails but not increased day use and RV camping the park should stay nature oriented
154	Interconnected trails and added day use areas
155	It does not take all day to do stuff. More accessibility.
156	It is cost-effective both to create and to maintain, honors the environmental protection intent of so many donors to park land acquisition, and utilizes a new visitors center intelligently (ie, a central location from which one can most easily then go to the part of the park which they wish to utilize).
157	It protects the environment in an age when development is and will be rampant. It does not compromise my family's safety since it does not use Proctor Road ("C" Ave.) which I live on; it is less expensive and requires less tax revenue to build and maintain.
158	It provides access to more of the rock in the gorge. Ideally, I would like to see access to all of the rock in the park.
159	Joining trails, use of existing areas, provides camping options
160	Keep the entrance/exit where it is, conservation is very important.
161	Keeping the Rumbling Bald Area clear for climbers. At areas like Pilot Mountain State Park some day users interfere with climbers and create potentially hazardous situations.
162	lack of impact on the forested area. Less foot traffic and less visiting population allows for a better and more natural environmental preserve
163	least amount of impact to natural mountain environment
164	legal climbing access for round top mountain, the north face of rumbling bald, eagle rock, and cloven cliff even if a long hike is required to get to some of the climbing areas
165	less disturbance of the land, but still usable by the public
166	Less impact on surrounding area. Reopens an upper trail in the park. Visitors Center in Lake Lure - good idea.
167	Locating the Visitor Center near new bridge
168	Long hikes
169	Long loop trail/thru-hike, access to Ghost Town and north face of Rumbling Bald climbing
170	long loop trails, full access to the entire park. recent closures are completely disatisfying and extremely limit the parks potential

## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

171	Long loop trails, more access points, mnt biking
172	Long loops with easy bailout access.
173	Longer trails.
174	Love the addition of mountain biking trails! IMBA needs to help design these trails. The southwest NC mountains are already a mountain biking destination. Great trails here would draw people to the Lake Lure area in addition to the trails in Pisgah, Tsail, etc. The backpacking areas look great as well.
175	Love the loop hiking! Love the mtn biking at north end!
176	Low impact activities. We do not need long car lines or RV's here. Too many curves, too much exhaust, too many people. The infrastructure will not support the increase in traffic. Have another entrance in Edneyville with tent camping.
177	Low Impact but ample parking for climbing areas.
178	Low Impact Recreation 1) I like that there are several campgrounds, especially the group campground in the Orchard area. 2) I like that there is a World's Edge day use area. 3) I agree with placing a visitor center in the Meadows area, which grants visitors free access to the trails. The entrance fee should only apply to those driving to the top and riding the elevator.
179	Low impact recreation such as sustainable multi-use (hiking and mountain biking) trails and primitive camping are what I prefer to campgrounds, picnic areas, etc...
180	Low impact to the environment.
181	Lower impact overall with enhanced current access. Access to Shumont Mountain
182	many activity based options, hiking, climbing, etc.
183	Maps are too small/poor resolution to read. Rock climbing is my #1, #2 and #3 priority. Public camping would be a bonus, since right now there are only private options.
184	More access and activities
185	More backpacking and hiking opportunities without cutting back on existing recreational areas
186	More climbing access and mt bike trails
187	more hiking trails
188	more hiking trails to significant peaks and extended hikes
189	more hiking trails, more camping areas
190	More hiking trails, without the vehicle traffic
191	More hiking, better access, less construction needed.
192	More likely to allow rock climbing.
193	More options.
194	More recreation opportunities for the general public, especially access to climbing areas and (a distant second) mountain biking opportunities.
195	More trails
196	More trails - especially mountain biking. Connect to Weed Patch to expand biking later. Connect trails to other proposed trail systems in the gorge.
197	more trails and opportunities for exploration. Bike trails
198	More trails, more access to backcountry areas.
199	Mountain Bike
200	Mountain bike access.
201	Mountain bike route, hiking trails, still large amount of conservation.
202	Mountain bike trail
203	Mountain bike trail.
204	Mountain bike trails
205	mountain bike trails
206	mountain bike trails
207	Mountain Bike Trails
208	Mountain Bike Trails
209	mountain bike trails
210	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS
211	Mountain bike trails
212	Mountain Bike Trails
213	mountain bike trails
214	mountain bike trails
215	Mountain bike trails
216	MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS
217	Mountain bike trails separate from hikers and horses - for safety.
218	mountain bike trails, backpack camping area, limited vehicle access & building infrastructure.
219	Mountain bike trails.
220	Mountain bike trails.
221	Mountain bike trails
222	Mountain Biking
223	Mountain biking



## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

224	mountain biking
225	Mountain Biking
226	Mountain biking
227	mountain biking
228	Mountain Biking
229	Mountain Biking
230	Mountain Biking
231	Mountain biking
232	Mountain biking
233	Mountain Biking
234	Mountain Biking
235	Mountain Biking
236	Mountain biking
237	mountain biking
238	Mountain biking
239	Mountain biking access.
240	Mountain biking and camping
241	mountain biking and camping
242	Mountain biking and hiking.
243	Mountain Biking in a low impact area
244	Mountain biking options are very limited in the gorge so adding trails would draw a lot more visitors to the park. I also like the idea of backpacking trails and primitive camping options.
245	Mountain Biking possibilities and also Climbing access
246	Mountain biking single track
247	Mountain biking trail
248	mountain biking trails
249	Mountain biking trails
250	mountain biking trails
251	Mountain biking trails
252	Mountain biking trails
253	Mountain biking trails
254	mountain biking trails
255	mountain biking trails
256	mountain biking trails
257	mountain biking trails
258	Mountain Biking trails
259	mountain biking trails
260	Mountain biking trails
261	Mountain Biking trails and camping
262	mountain biking trails, extended hiking
263	mountain biking trails, sustainable single track is low impact, great exercise and a beautiful way to see the park
264	Mountain biking, basic amenities, but more loops
265	Mountain biking, camp sites.
266	Mountain biking, uni-directional downhill trails with input/exit points just like kayaking. Proper signage to indicate such.
267	Mountainbiking
268	mountainbiking, hiking, camping
269	Mountain Biking access loop with camping opportunities.
270	mountain biking
271	mt bike trails
272	MTB trail option
273	mtb trails
274	MTB TRAILS
275	Mtn Biking
276	mtn biking
277	mtn biking opportunities
278	Mtn Biking trails
279	Mtn Biking, backpacking, day use area
280	Mtn. bike trails, human powered low impact recreation
281	Mtn. Biking
282	mtn.bike loop, low-impact emphasis
283	Multiple hiking trails, increased uses, a wider nature experience.

## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

284	Must expand rock climbing areas. This is regionally significant area - thousands of climbers visit annually. There is 20+ year history of climbing. Many developed areas not on your map.
285	must have camping facility somewhere in park! MUST open as many cliffs as possible to rock climbing as an approved activity. Climbers are one of the areas largest and most responsible user groups. Climbers are good environmental stewards. Opening more areas mitigates the impact of any user group. Both the north and south sides of Rumbling Bald should be open to climbing. Round Top Mountain should be open to climbing. The Worlds Edge tracts cliffs should be open to climbing as should various cliffs in chimney Rock Park proper that are not above trails. Climb is a historic use of all these areas with usage dating back to at least the 1960s.
286	98145.452
287	New mountain biking trails
288	Not excessive impact, but plenty of human powered access.
289	On behalf of Cane Creek Cycling Components, based in Fletcher, we are very interested in seeing mountain bike opportunities within the Chimney Rock/Lake Lure area. With both "Low Impact" and "Intensive" we see the opportunity for trail development as a positive step, and would like to see it also included in "Conservation."
290	open land, fellow users understand the value of the open space.
291	Open to more rock climbing
292	opening up more areas
293	Our family looks for parks with single track mountain bike trails. Pocohantas State Park and Douthat State Park in Virginia are great examples how to utilize tax dollars to meet the needs of the public.
294	Overnight camping
295	Personally, I want access to all the climbing areas. But I am happy to see recreational access for others with other interests.
296	picnic areas, pavillions for renting for private parties
297	Plenty of hiking trails, and climbing but not overloaded with parking, roads, and picnic areas.
298	Preservation of existing natural elements, less impact
299	Preservation of land, wildlife, and ecosystems, hiking trails, welcome center across from Town Hall
300	Preservation of the parks wildlife, plant and geologic communities for all to enjoy.
301	Preserving the natural resource. Attracting large crowd's with intensive recreation will only damage the resource. Look at the changes being made to Yosemite NP currently to reduce the amount of traffic in the park.
302	primarily i am interested in the mountain biking and hiking trails near rumbling bald, which both option 2 & 3 have the same. i think the intensive recreation site with parking for 300 could be used for large outdoor festival events. i also think the day use area by the bottomless pools would be utilized.
303	Proposed mountain biking trails.
304	Protecting the native rare plants. Most citizens do not realize the impact they may have on some of the native species, especially rare ones.
305	Protection of nationally significant SNHAs but providing hiking - more hiking should be provided on more usable land so the SNHA's are not destroyed. I also like the visitor center across from Town Hall so people can get info before deciding where to go.
306	Provides a greater proportion of undisturbed land.
307	Provides many opportunities for recreation while preserving the natural beauty of the area.
308	Re-open trails to top of waterfall
309	Reinstate the original trails to top of Hickory Nut Falls. Improve safety of trails. Keep the park as a natural area rather than a commercial hub.
310	Reopen bottomless pools to the public
311	Restricting access to naturally significant area impact by focusing on the more available and usable area.
312	Right balance of access and impact. Mountain Biking trails are very important for any state park to address the needs of park users and, when done correctly, are environmentally sensitive. This also allows for another user group to provide volunteer hours for maintenance and enhancement of park facilities.
313	Rock climbers should have access to ALL rock within the park. Access to all rock will mitigate use impact in the already over-used areas (Rumbling Bald). There needs to be adequate parking and information on where to park and how to reach various areas of the park. Opening more areas will bring more people to the park on a year round basis, and will economically benefit the local areas. Climbers are traditionally a low impact group, who are willing to chip in and help with trail building, information dissemination, and clean up. Working with climbers is wise, as they will return the sentiment over a long term period of time, to help maintain the park.
314	rock climbing
315	98145.452
316	Rock Climbing
317	Rock climbing
318	rock climbing
319	rock climbing
320	Rock Climbing Access
321	Rock climbing and bouldering
322	rumbling access & expansion
323	see question #11



## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

324	Seems like the best compromise. Intensive is too much development, conservation is very close second as I think the trails are very good now
325	Seems to keep climbers, hikers and other low impact park users in mind, but keeps environmental impact to a minimum. Seems like a good balance.
326	shumont
327	Shumont Mountain Day use Area and the Shumont Mountain Bike Trails
328	Slight improvements to roads/parking for access to Rumbling bald. Last year (during the peak bouldering season- the winter months) the parking area was approaching max capacity on weekends.
329	slow growth of park additions to see how it impacts the current wilderness.
330	State Parks should be accessible for the public to use and enjoy, this alternative allows for the widest range of that use.
331	Sustainably built trails, specific to low impact users (mountain bikers, climbers and hikers) and utilizing minimal disruption and development of park land, presents itself as a worthwhile investment. Human powered activities, typically supported by those who practice "leave no trace" philosophies, are a natural match for promoting outdoor physical activities that encourage healthier lifestyles and kindness to the environment in which we love to play.
332	Taking advantage of already existing developed areas. Looks like rock climbing areas will be accessible and protected, but not likely to garner huge crowds.
333	Tent camping options and additional hiking trails.
334	Tent camping, more hiking opportunities, picnic areas in more places and most of all that people of all abilities can enjoy the park. The park needs to have enough roads and trails so everyone can enjoy it regardless of their athletic ability.
335	tent camping, multiple access points, multiple parking areas, improved and established new trails, rock climbing, bouldering.
336	tent camping; No RV's; No light pollution
337	That it provides for visitor but does little to disturb natural setting
338	The 10-mile mountain bike trail.
339	The addition of Rumbling Bald Ridge
340	The additional of Mountain Bike Trails
341	The additional trails, both hiking and biking. More access. Several camping options.
342	The balance between conservation and park development for recreational use; I especially like as well access thru Lake Lure Town Center to Meadows/Park HQ and trail access from Lake Lure; also like locations of camping areas at Cane Creek Mtn. near Rumbling Bald Resort.
343	The climbing and mountain biking opportunities.
344	the day-use areas at Shumont and Rumbling Bald. Also, more trails.
345	The easy access for more people to utilize the park and the mountain bike trails
346	The expansion of the Rumbling Bald climbing area.
347	The fact that existing disturbed areas will be use for future expansion.
348	The focus on Outdoor Recreation opportunities in the park --- particularly mtn. biking and rock climbing
349	The hiking and mountain bike trails
350	The idea of a having a second way into the Park is a good idea. I am interested in having more hiking and biking options.
351	The inclusion of mountain bike trails
352	The inclusion of mountain biking trails without over-development of the area.
353	The increased hiking trails throughout the entire park and the ability to create looped hikes. I also like the visitor center closer to the impacted area and not building a long, winding road to access it. Back country sites are essential.
354	The increased number and tie-in of hiking trails.
355	the intensive alternative appears to have the best accessible trails
356	The Lake Lure/Chimney Rock area has been "invaded" by too many folks who are from other states. While I welcome their appreciation of our beautiful area, I feel that they have ruined it somewhat by constantly building, tearing up nature and, as a native of Rutherford County, I would like to see this kind of so-called "progress" ended. They aren't making any more land...and this land should and must be saved before becoming the "Disney Land" of western North Carolina. I grew up water skiing, hiking, tubing and loving this area. That love will always be in my heart. I just visited Alaska and am thankful for the preservation of one of our last wildernesses. Please do all you can to preserve the beautiful, natural areas. Please don't build anymore million dollar homesites and leave some of the beauty for future generations! PLEASE!
357	The low impact recreation alternative provides many desirable elements: It provides for many miles of hiking options to explore and enjoy the park. It provides backpacking possibilities for serious hikers. People traveling long distances to visit the park, have the option of staying at a walk-in campsite; this makes a long trip more feasible. The park's visitor center is inside the park, and it is in the "Meadows". The "Orchards" are largely left alone. A major road project is not cut through the heart of the park. More intense development is kept on the park's edges, except for the core, already disturbed, attraction area.

## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

358	The low impact recreation option makes the most sense for future growth. It offers the kind of outdoor experiences guests are looking to find - more and varied hiking opportunities, mountain biking, rock climbing and camping - without compromising the sensitive environment that makes this area so special. The proposed location for a Visitors Center on the upper Meadows is not unlike a plan the Morse family had once considered for a multi-purpose complex - a ticket office, orientation area, with information and educational areas and retail and office space. Traffic flow could be better managed during the busy season with guests being transported to and from the top of the mountain from this area by buses or trams on a controlled schedule. Owning and operating a campground is almost prohibitive with the cost of real estate in a tourist community. Adding primitive and family camping is an important amenity for any State Park. I'm not the best judge of where it should be located, but making different types of camping space available would be very important to this community and our guests.
359	The low-impact recreation combines a nice amalgamation of conservation efforts and recreation opportunities. The impact of a visitor's center, access road(s) for the center, RV camping, a parking lot for 300 cars, and other development would be quite detrimental for the habitat in the Orchards area.
360	The mountain bike trail.
361	The Mountain bike trails
362	The mountain bike trails offer a low impact way to conserve and get people out in the woods so they can become more connected.
363	The mountain bike trails, although I would like to see longer distance options.
364	The mountain bike trails.
365	The mutiple day use areas and the many camping/rv opportunities and extensive trail network. I definetly think that we should be developing a high use park. There is just so much to do and explore in and around the gorge.
366	The park is uniquely situated for access (Greenville, Asheville, Atlanta, Charlotte, etc.). As such, it seems most appropriate to utilize it for the recreational opportunities that this natural area affords. Additionally, recreational use would appear to most benefit the town of Lake Lure.
367	The potential for future access for rock climbing
368	The preservation of nature and existing beauty
369	The recreation focus seems most compatible with climbing access.
370	The respect for the environment and protection of rare species. The understanding of the importance of viewshed protection.
371	The road that goes to lake Lure from the meadows., prefer the visitor center to be located at the meadows and have a separate road without an fee station. The present road to the top needs a lot of work done to it as well as the water and sewer system.
372	The state park system in NC really needs some good single track mountain bike trails.
373	The trail to the falls top, although it isn't close enough to the edge of the cliffs. Also the better parking and the chimney rock trail that is long.
374	The trails
375	The trails, increased access points, and camping opportunities.
376	The trails, new accesses, camping, and climbing access at Rumbling Bald.
377	The variety of trails and access to lands that we can't get to today
378	The Visitor Center being located across from Town Hall
379	The Visitor Center in the community... more accessible to the public than in the Meadows or on top of the mountain. The added hiking trails! The mountain bike trails!
380	The Visitor's center down on hwy 64/74A, the restored Bottomless Pools day use area, the emphasis on conservation, tying trails into the Town of Lake Lure network
381	There are fewer places left where nature still reigns supreme. I love camping but would hate to see more roads in the park or wider wider and camping, with water and sewage needs despoiling the land.
382	This area needs to be a conservation park with limited access to protect the environmental/biological communities.
383	Tight turning and twisting single track mtn. bike trails with points of interest along to way to view and rest. I enjoy just getting out in the woods and seeing wildlife as I ride/stop on two wheels.
384	98145.452
385	98145.452
386	trails
387	Trails or trail connectivity for Cane Creek Mtn and Bottomless Pools; multiple day use areas; mountain bike trail section
388	trails to the orchard and bottomless pools
389	Trails, Access to overlooks
390	Trails, access to the orchards
391	trails, and multi-sport activities.
392	upper trails with great views
393	uses existing disturbed areas, improvements to entrance, more hiking trails
394	Using the existing park facilities and trail systems that are already in place. Listen to the people that come to the park....They want the Skyline Trail opened..it is all they care about...
395	Utilizing the land to provide wider use and providing the public with more varied uses.
396	Variety

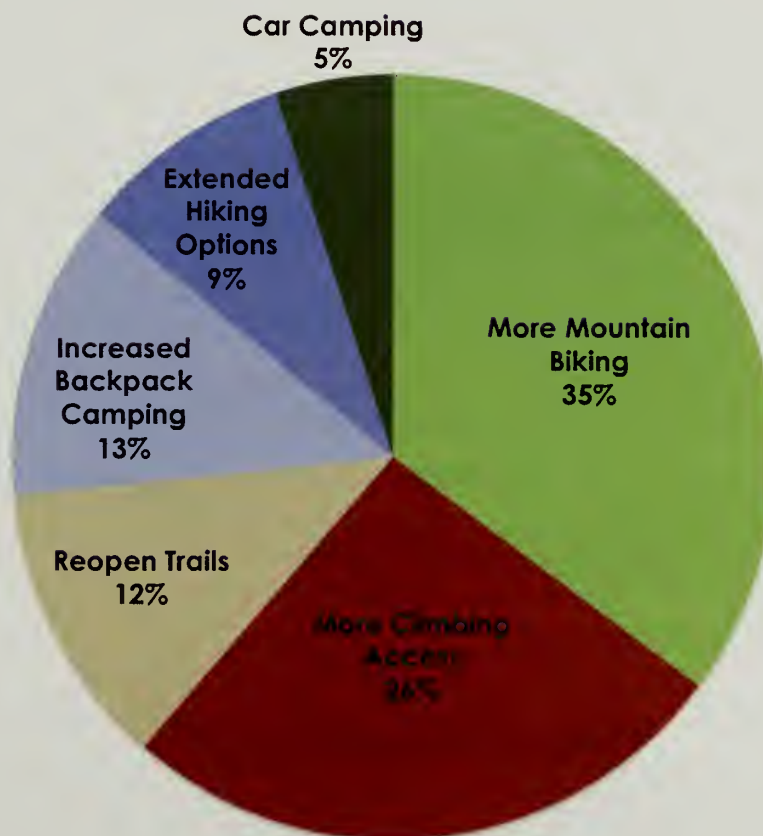




## QUESTION 9 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

397	Vehicle Management
398	Visitor center good idea
399	Visitor center, parking options and possibility of a paved road into the Orchard and the top of Chimney Rock Mountain
400	We would like access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc. 2. Opening more cliffs will mean a) reduced impact on the already hammered Rumbling Bald, as our numbers would spread over a larger area, b) year-round visitors to the park, and c) increased economic activity for the surrounding community. 3. New routing should be allowed to continue in the park. 4. We are a low impact user group. All we really need to practice our sport are trails, water, parking and camping. For good climbing we'll hike. Visual and environmental impact can be mitigated through intelligent trail building, permitting, cliff-top anchors, etc. And we can be counted on to volunteer, building trails, picking up trash, etc.
401	Whichever that has the most mtn. biking trails
402	Would like to include equestrian trails.
403	Would love to see the park stay just like it is now. It should be assessible to horse back riding and hikers which would have the lowest impact on the property. No motorized vehicles in the park at all.

QUESTION 10 (OPEN-ENDED): FOR YOUR MOST PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE, PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY CHANGES YOU WOULD MAKE FOR IT TO REFLECT YOUR OWN VISION FOR THE FUTURE CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK (graph shows top results, individual responses are listed on the following pages)



## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

1	<p>1. If at all possible I think the park should reopen the Skyline and Cliff trails at Chimney Rock. Other than the rock itself, these two trails are the center piece of what folks want inside the fee area. If rock climbing is allowed, I'm not sure how liability is such an issue.</p> <p>2. An area for tent camping needs to be developed. RV and trailer camping areas would be nice, but only if you can find a low impact area that is easily accessible.</p> <p>3. A trail to the large waterfall on Pool Creek would be great.</p> <p>4. At some point, access from Proctor Road needs to be developed. The old logging road from Proctor Road to World's Edge is a great hiking and mountain biking area. None of the proposals have a trail in the heart of the Pool Creek/World's Edge tract and this is missing a huge part of what makes this park great.</p> <p>5. The more hiking trails the better!</p> <p>6. Definitely continue to allow rock climbing at Rumbling Bald and expand rock climbing areas as long as the environment is not damaged.</p>
2	<p>1. Day use area for higher public visitation to the Bottomless Pools</p> <p>2. Car-camping site area developed</p> <p>3. One trail only sensitively sited between Round-top and Rumbling Bald in cove and streams area -- run trail near along base of Rumbling bald cliffs</p>
3	10-12 miles of rolling single track
4	2 price structures, one low ticket price for meadow picnic area/ and for those that just want to ride up and experience the area and take pictures from the chimney, and move on to other activities down in the town, then a 2nd choice higher price ticket for long stays and hiking long trails
5	20-25 miles of mountain bike trails would make this a destination, especially with the other facilities
6	A clear policy on climbing and biking access. Yearly passes.
7	a little more mountain biking trail, 10 miles is a bit short
8	A longer loop of bike trail and tent/trailer campground with hot showers.
9	access for more climbing options other than what is currently available at the rumbling bald. would relieve impact at that destination.
10	access to all rock faces for climbing. New routes allowed via a "permit system"
11	Access to all rock-climbing areas, on trails that don't impact the view for others (hikers, photographers). Permit-based route setup, with permanent anchors at the top of routes as approved by park service. Some composting-type restroom facilities, such as at Thomas Knob on Mt Rogers, Va and on the A.T. at a few key locations. Limited parking with hike-in.
12	access to all trails, just alternate different days for different uses.
13	access to Round Top Mountain, climbing access via Mtn. Bike access to N. side of Rumbling Bald Mtn., consideration of climbing manager position or recreation-based position to work specifically with recreation
14	Access to the climbing areas on the north face of Rumbling Bald.
15	Add a day use area at bottomless pools and a few picnic areas
16	add a network of trails (or one trail) that circumnavigates the park - it would bring riders from all over
17	add climbing to the plan
18	add montain biking trails using paris mountain SC state park or pishah as models
19	Add more hiking trails, rock climbing off of Boys Camp Rd, even bike trails, but leave public camping out of the mixture for fire considerations and do this slowly to be able to gage the impact it has on the area.
20	Add more miles - more trails
21	Add more mountain bike trails...a 10 mile loop is great but additional trails would allow for trails for all skill levels which could be left out with a single ten mile loop.
22	Add more mountain biking trails
23	add more mountain biking trails, accessible from Chimney Rock/Lake Lure areas
24	<p>Add more trails at the top of Chimney Rock to the falls.</p> <p>Add hike in camping spots.</p> <p>Add in smaller pavilions for small gatherings.</p> <p>Add water fountains near trail heads.</p>
25	Add mt. biking trails
26	add parking area for climbing access to Round Top Mountain, add trail for climbing access to North Face of Rumbling Bald, climber-friendly car camping
27	<p>add the Weed Patch area to the park to enable safe and logical hiking and mountain biking routes. Current plans show mountain biking and hiking on extremely unsafe and biologically valuable nationally significant SNHA's -- acquisition of Weed Patch would allow not only an additional needed state road access, but a reasonable amount of land to provide for the required 10 miles of bike paths. It would be foolish and unpopular to route the hikes and mountain biking from the top of Shumont Mountain. Homeowners do not want the public to access, and the back side of Rumbling Bald is not reasonable terrain for either mountain biking or hiking. It additionally has extremely sensitive areas which should be protected. Weed Patch is already owned by a conservation group, so would not require tedious landowner negotiations. Additionally CWMTF has indicated that it is top on the list of properties to be financed in the mountains when funding becomes available. With so few activities currently available in the park, this option would require no road construction and no access hassles. It additionally would spread traffic out to a third access direction, being only 20 minutes from I-40. All other activity options in the park have lengthy and expensive timelines - - why not provide the public with activities right away on Weed Patch? Also, if recreation is restricted on valuable lands without providing suitable alternatives, people will continue to use the land inappropriately, and preservation will be lost. The park has received so much media attention that this conundrum must be addressed. We must find a solution which provides reasonable recreation but which still protects the natural resource.</p>
28	Addition of cross country and downhill specific mountain bike trails.



## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

29	Addition of day use area at bottomless pools. Keep it as natural and undisturbed as possible while still allowing access.
30	Additional mtn biking trails
31	Again I would like to see more opportunities for climbers on some of the other great cliffs of the area. It would be nice to have a good working relationship with the state at this Park. Rumbling Bald is a fantastic area, but there is so much more available that should be considered.
32	Again, separate the biking trails from the hiking trails (for safety reasons) and keep bikes out of the existing park. RE-OPEN THE SKYLINE TRAIL TO THE TOP OF THE FALLS. THE CLIFF TRAIL TOO - BUT THAT MAY BE TOUGHER B/C OF THE COST. I'd pay more to get in the park to fund the rebuild of the Cliff Trail.
33	Allow climbing access to Round Top Mountain and the North Side of Rumbling Bald.
34	allow climbing in all areas, create mountain bike specific trail systems
35	Allow mountain biking on more trails
36	Allow Rock Climbing! Preserve areas that are ecologically sensitive. Don't waste money building roads and Visitor centers that people will infrequently visit (Orchards Area). Specifically, minimize impact as much as possible while allowing visitors to pursue their own avenues of recreation. Whether it be kayaking, biking, rock climbing, hiking, or just enjoying the day. Please spend money wisely on what actual park users actually prefer doing. And most importantly please don't limit access of Chimney Rock to rock climbers.. we're willing to pay for use, but un-willing to pay a guides service for what we can do ourselves. Don't monopolize the climbing sector by requiring guides. It is demeaning, and most of all it actually reduces the amount of users. Thus the park takes in less money, and there is an inconsistent user base. By allowing and supporting rock climbers, mountain bikers, improved hiking, Chimney Rock state park will attract attention from users all over the southeast. It could be the best state park in the US, if it catered to more than just the infrequent tourist.
37	Although the topography makes it impractical. I would still like to see vehicle accessible camping.
38	Another mountain bike trail/loop with accessible camping (tent) and hot showers
39	Appreciation Opportunities: meaning to provide users of each 'type of activity' with the opportunity to view 'other users of other activities' so each 'group' can gain a better appreciation for the others. (help to minimize contention). Might also set aside certain areas as 'protected' and to only be used for minimalist activities (hiking)
40	As a rock climber I would love to see continued access to areas that have already been developed such as Rumbling Bald proper, while ensuring access to lesser known, but developed areas such as Ghost Town, Eagle Rock, The North Side of Rumbling Bald and I'm sure there are more that I am missing. This may already be a part of the "low impact recreation" alternative, but it was tough to tell.
41	As an experienced rock climber who has traveled extensively, I realize that Hickory nut gorge is home to some of the finest rock climbing and bouldering in the country. I hope the state park will realize that Chimney rock park is the yosemite of the east and will allow rock climbing on round top mountain, the north face of rumbling bald, eagle rock, and cloven cliff. The climbing at these areas in the park in addition to rumbling bald is truly world class, and if proper camping facilities are built in the park, visiting climbers will be a valuable source of income for local businesses during peak climbing season (October - March) when visitation is traditionally down.
42	Be sure to keep gift shops and high density tourist areas tightly contained.
43	Be sure to staff Shumont Road entrance and activities - improve Shumont Road
44	better access for low impact use
45	Better access with trash cans available in multiple locations. A water fountain would be nice as well.
46	Bigger Mountain bike Loop
47	Bring back the "Last of the Moheicans (sp?) Trail" Allow Mountain Bikers to volunteer to maintain the trail.
48	Camp sites close to climbing areas would give an excellent option to proximate of climbing routes to camp sites. Open climbing at Round Top and Chimney Rock
49	can we increase any of the mtn trails?
50	Can you make that map in a size that I can print off the computer and still read? Or send in a pdf? pbuede@bellsouth.net
51	Can't think of a thing.
52	Car camping
53	Change from the lack of mtn. bike trails or prohibited use of existing trails to the building of mtn. bike trails and the allowed use of existing trails for mtn. biking.
54	Chimney Rock Park needs a Grand Lodge similar to those found at Yosemite and Grand Canyon. Most local lodging is dated. A grand lodge would be an economic engine for area.
55	Chimney Rock Park's greatest resources is its beauty and potential for outdoor recreation. There is a lot of rock with in the borders of the park. The staggering amount of potentially climbable rock, coupled with the parks accessibility and proximity to Asheville, could potentially make this area one the greatest rock climbing destinations on the east coast. However, this can only be fully actualized if climbers are granted access to the north facing side of the gorge. This would allow for excellent climbing in all seasons, further increasing the utility of the park.
56	Clearly mark trails and keep different activities separate. Hikers, bikers, and horses don't mix well.
57	Combining parts of alt #1 and #2 seem to be a solution that will keep the Park alive and healthy and still have growth.
58	Conservation-preferred-add mtn. trails, trails, and some day use areas of #2, none of #3.
59	Conservation/preservation is of great importance - I would like to see a reasonable blend of low impact recreation designed with conservation/preservation in mind.
60	Consider re-pen Cliff & Skyline Trail
61	Create a trail or parking area for access to "Ghost Town"/Round Top Mountain

## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

62	Definitely acquire and develop activity center at Bottomless Pools; Provide trail access connecting north and south portions of CRSP; Incorporate Lake Lure Summits Trail for extended hiking opportunity around heights/ridges above Lake Lure.
63	Designate specific sensitive areas to be conserved and let people recreate on the rest.
64	Develop tent and trailer camping in Worlds Edge camp area. No 4-wheelers on off-road motor beds anywhere in park.
65	Development of former Skyline Trail and Cliffside Trail. What's going to happen to Inspiration Point? Top of Falls? Would like future access.
66	discounts available for students
67	dispersed access points
68	Education is the most effective way. If some controls are in place, such as guided group tours of sensitive areas, citizens will respond more ethically to impacts on the rare plants, etc.
69	Encourage addition of Weed Patch property beyond Rumbling Bald Resort for more trails and ideal location for any trail/bike trails that might be considered.
70	Ensure recreational rock climbing access to not only Rumbling Bald, but also permit the public (non-guided trips) to climb on Chimney Rock proper.
71	Expand the study area north to include Weed Patch Mountain so logical hiking and biking opportunities can be provided without expensive road building, and so the SNHA's can be protected.
72	From Exclamation Point, I would like to see the original trail to the top of the falls reopened with improvements for safety only, then it could be extended out to the orchard trail. The walk along the edge of the cliffs was my favorite part of the park. You are losing a wonderful and unique part of your park by closing that area.
73	have not yet been
74	Having Mountain Bike Trails.
75	horseback riding
76	Horses (not motorized)
77	I am not sure of the purpose of a large visitor center. It would appear more prudent, and less impacting, to ensure that human impact is minimized as people enjoy the park. In my experience, this requires clearly marked / maintained / adequate parking, clearly posted trailheads and garbage receptacles and restrooms.
78	I am pleased with what I see. A lot of study has gone into these plans.
79	I am unsure of whether this is already part of the alternative, but I would like to see the parking area for climbing access become more accessible to vehicles with lower ground clearance, even if that means requiring a longer walk-in to the climbing areas.
80	I cannot tell for sure if the old upper loop trail to upper falls is in any of the alternatives, but I think it is crazy to not refurbish and reopen this trail, it is the pinnacle of why I ever visited the park.
81	I do have a concern about the environmental impact of any new vehicular roads. I believe it WILL be necessary to create some new access roads, but I would favor the vehicular routes that would limit environmental impact (the "west side of Chimney Rock Mountain" route that's mentioned does NOT sound good).
82	I do like the additional camping areas that are in the Intensive Recreation section, but think the (IR) may be to intensive for the park.
83	I do not know what is being considered in terms of climbing access for the Round Top Mountain Conservation MGMT Area of proposed Chimney Rock State Park visitor center. I believe all areas should be open to climbing except where rockfall is an imminent threat to parked cars or major trails used by other visitors.
84	I do not like the idea of building a new road or a visitor center at the orchard. I think the elevator built into the mountain is a travesty and would prefer to avoid any additional intense changes to the area. Although additional camping and access options would be beneficial. I do not see a benefit to installing a visitor center at the Rumbling Bald access point.
85	I do not like the visitor center as part of any plan.
86	I do not see any plans for drive-in camping, and think that this is a pivotal issue, particularly if we are to draw the climbers who would come here, given access and a place to lay their head.
87	I don't want there to be a zoo of people
88	I have learned to trust the vision of our park developers to design what is best for the terrian and ecology.
89	I hope parking 300 cars doesnt ruin the park. Maybe parking the cars below somewhere and bringing people up by bus is a better option.
90	I like alternative #2 with the lowest amount of impact possible.
91	I like the conservation approach, however I would recognize that climbers and backpackers are conservation-oriented people and that they are good stewards of the area.
92	I like the idea of expanding rock climbing offerings in the area. Currently, less than 20% of the cliffs in the project area are open to rock climbing, which is minimally invasive and low-impact. If the general rule was that climbing would be allowed in all areas except those that require special environmental exceptions, that would be incredible! High-impact recreation (ORVs, picnic and car camping areas, visitor center, etc.) should be concentrated in areas that are already developed to preserve open space.
93	I like the idea of low impact activities but am disapointed it does not include more MTB trails. The trails could be multiuse, allowing for more trail for all users. This model has been successful in other parts of the state.
94	I Like whichever alternative opens up the most climbing.
95	I love the plan as is.
96	I really hope the Cliffs trail can be reopened at some point.





## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

97	I think I answered this in #9. More parking, primitive camping would be great.
98	I think that the local climbers really value as much access to climbing as possible. North Carolina climbers are known to be respectful, responsible and aware and could be a keystone in the successful development of the state park.
99	I think we can all share the trails. It would nice, however, to limit horse back and mountain bike riding to specific times and days so that those who long for the quiet can be assured sole access to the trails occasionally.
100	I think you have a great opportunity to make a wonderful park! With the long range views and the lay of the land. I would like to see more multi-use trails in areas away from the populated areas. It would be great to see some mt biking trails on the worlds edge side so you are not putting all the riders in one area. Dupont is a great example of trails built for all users. Building trails that are for multi-use and built right would give all users of the park a great experience. We all want people to get outside and enjoy our wonderful state! The more we can get people outside and using our park system the better we will all be.
101	I was not able to clearly see access points from the map. I would like to see access to the Shumont Mountain area from Hwy 9/Shumont Road in Buncombe County if possible.
102	i would add a longer bike trail, perhaps more of them
103	I would add a slightly longer loop of bike trail and a tent-only campground with hot showers connected by a short bike trail
104	I would add mountain biking on the northern end of the park.
105	I would allow more longer trails and more primitive camping in back woods area.
106	I would also support approval of any other climbing areas that are in the park such as Hickory Nut Gorge.
107	I would consider the addition of a few of the low impact recreation features suggested in alternative 2, including the proposed egress road if it can be limited to very moderate impact to the environment and to the seclusion of the private homes in the area.
108	I would create a sustainable network of mountain biking single track trails. The more trails the more times you have to come back to ride them all, and the more times you'll want to come back to do them again.
109	I would encourage providing a corridor for the Mountain Bike trails to connect to the town of Lake Lure. This could be a shared use path (hikers and bikers where bikers yield to hikers) or a separte trail for bikers. Many mountain bikers would love to bike a 10 to 20 mile trail and then frequent the restuarant and attractions in Lake Lure but may not camp. This allows for a bikers to access the park without have to drive to the day use parking lot.
110	I would extend the mountain bike trail to at least 20 miles. Combined with tent/trailer camping, it would then be a destination unto itself for this activity.
111	I would hope for designated areas specific to biking, hiking and climbing alongside the common visitor, so as to draw in plenty of park visitors from several groups of significant size, but maintaining a feeling of community and remoteness within each niche. ie: designated, sustainable mountain bike trails where pride in ownership is supported in part by volunteer efforts of the likes of IMBA ie: hiking trails could quite possibly be used in rotation - for possibly a year at a time and likewise, mountain bike trails could be used by hikers, kind of like recycling trails or rotating crops. ie: giving climbers access to more area in the gorge would reduce their impact on any one particular area, allowing plenty of options less visible signs of use.
112	I would just love to see real single track mountain bike trails at the park. Please note that double track service roads are NOT what mountain bikers are looking for.
113	I would like hiking and primitive camping with picnic tables
114	I would like more camping options closer to the Rumbling Bald climbing areas.
115	I would like new routing to be allowed in the park.
116	I would like the addition of backpack camping area by Cane Creek as shown in the Low Impact Recreation alternative.
117	I would like to be able to have some mountain bike trails. I would encourage the designation of some of the trails to not allow bikes.
118	I would like to see a larger trail network allowing mountain biking. Mountain biking has a similar environmental impact to hiking and should be treated as such. I would recommend mountain biking be included even in alternative 1. For alternatives 2 and 3 I would recommend extending the length of the mountain biking trail network to attract more users and provide a more enjoyable experience for mountain bikers. Additionally, while I do enjoy mountain bike specific trails I also would suggest making some trails multi-use so that multiple user groups are served for the same amount of impacted land.
119	I would like to see a lot more mountain bike trails, covering a lot more milage, perhaps circumnavigating the park. Many people aren't aware of how much ground mountain bikes can cover, and we can get a long way from parking areas quickly, minimizing any potential trail crowding. And, since mountain bikers prefer singletrack trails, which have a minimal impact on the surrounding forest, it's an easy way to attract users for the facility.
120	I would like to see an access point for hiking on or around Round Top Mountain.
121	I would like to see climbing allowed at Chimney Rock proper, Round Top, Eagle Rock and the north side of Rumbling Bald Mtn.
122	I would like to see more mountain biking trails and small parking lot trailheads created.
123	I would like to see more mountain biking trails.
124	I would like to see more mtn biking. Perhaps a large perimeter trail open to biker/hikers. Also, more access to rock climbing. Specifically permitting to allow colleges and universities to program at Chimney Rock.
125	I would like to see more provisions made for climber access to the major crags in the area. Specifically, addition of plan elements that directly speak to this use would be a valuable addition to the current options.
126	I would like to see mountain biking trails for beginners through advanced riders. I also would like to see opportunities for rock climbing throughout the park.

## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

127	I would like to see public access to the top of the waterfall from the Orchards area. Also, I would like to see less of an emphasis on the communities of Chimney Rock Village and the Town of Lake Lure and more of an emphasis on Hickory Nut Gorge as a whole ecosystem.
128	I would like to see rb parking improved as well as the day use area added.
129	I would like to see the new Park road be a loop road ending in the Village of Chimney Rock vs. one way in from Chimney Rock and two-way traffic on the Lake Lure end.
130	I would like to see the park become a destination for Mountain biking.
131	I would like to see the skyline/cliff trail loop revisited. Even if the Skyline trail is no longer salvagable, the cliff trail is. And it already exists! It is unlike any other trail I have ever been on. Also, if the Orchard trail opens, it needs to go closer to the top of the falls.
132	I would love to see climbing access to Roundtop Mountain.
133	I would love to see Down Hill Specific Mountain bike trails
134	I would love to see the climbing opportunities at the the park expanded a little.
135	I would open all the proposed trails to mountain bikes.
136	I would open all the proposed trails to mountain biking. I see no reason why a properly designed and built trail should be limited to hiking only. Mountain biking is a responsible, low impact, appropriate use for trails. Mountain bikers have shared trail access with hikers very successfully in many trail systems.
137	I would prefer to see a better balance between the amount of hiking trails versus biking trails. Both user groups fall into the same class of trail impact but the bikes will be intensively restricted to a small 10 mile loop while hikers will be spread over many more miles of trail. I question whether the longer hiking routes will see enough traffic while similar longer bike routes would be a huge asset to the park. The other feature I would like to see is the addition of a tent/trailer campground with hot showers and connectivity to the bike trails. This combined with longer bike routes would create a big economic benefit for the area, drawing out of town visitors for weekend trips.
138	I would suggest keeping the proposed "Bottomless Pools Trail" connection to the "Lake Lure Greenway" to promote connectivity between the community and the park. I also suggest looking for ways, perhaps in partnership with Lake Lure, to connect the trail systems on the Rumbling Bald and Chimney Rock sides to the park together. I would prefer to see development in the "Orchards" limited to just a hiking trail; the back-pack campsites can be located elsewhere. Every parking area for the park should consider the needs of bicycling parking. The park should be a friendly place for people who opt to road-bike to the park instead of driving a car. The plan should consider equestrian use in the Rumbling Bald area.
139	I would vote for more miles of mt. biking trails. Since it doesn't take long to cover a lot of ground on a bike, people might get bored with the riding if there is not enough. Climbing should be allowed at any cliff and/or bouldering area possible. Climbing is a very low impact activity and the hickory nut gorge has some of the best rock in the country!
140	I'd like to see a day-use area - trails, parking, and restrooms, at Round Top Mountain
141	I'd like to see more climbing areas opened to the public and managed in a way like at Stone Mtn. State Park or Hanging Rock State Park.
142	If I were king, the Rumbling Bald side would stay as it is with the exception of toilet facilities, primitive camping and trail development with mountain-biking in mind. I like the idea of a visitor center for the Chimney Rock side in town. This would improve visibility and make the park more approachable. In addition, it would be nice to develop a system of trails on the Chimney Rock side.
143	If the conservation focused park alternative included mountain biking opportunities I would favor that plan heavily. I want to see Chimney Rock Park remain as primitive as possible. I concede that the existing facilities at Chimney Rock itself are a great resource but want to see minimal development outside of that area. I would like to see the Chimney Rock Thru Hike trail open to bikes. I value the Shumont Trails and the addition of any mountain bike trails in 2 of the alternatives but trails that go in circles are not fun to ride. As a mountain biker I like to go places and cover way more ground than I could on foot.
144	Including mountain bike trails in any plan that advances.
145	Increase the rock climbing opportunities. Right now everyone is focused on the south side of Rumbling Bald. If climbers were spread out they would lessen the impact to that area. State Parks should work with climbers to identify new areas to climb that do not negatively impact rare or threatened species. If trails and landing zones were created on the front end the park could control where and how any impact is likely to occur. Allowing mountain biking on trails in the park is essential. Partnerships with both climbers and mountain bikers could ease the burden placed on park staff by creating "Adopt a Trail" program and working with them up front. This will lessen confusion and potential misunderstandings.
146	Increased management planning and study areas on a cliff-by-cliff basis for rock climbing; increased rock climbing access in general; rock climbing access within the entire Rumbling Bald, Worlds Edge, and Round Top Conservation Management Areas, as well as other areas of the park; rock climbing access within the Chimney Rock attraction area.
147	Intensive use - entrance from the West side of Sugarloaf Mountain
148	It is a crying shame that certain people in Raleigh can make decisions like closing the Skyline Cliff Trail without even understanding the consequences and how the park as a whole has basically dried up, and the village and citizens of Rutherford County are paying for it now!
149	It is not necessary to build a new visitor center on top of the park. Some basic parking and camping would be sufficient.
150	It's a good place to start.
151	Keep it low impact; limit the number of folks and vehicles on Shumont Rd. and access to Eagle Rock
152	Keep it natural and not have trails over private property
153	Keep Rumbling Bald fairly primitive. Trails and rest rooms ok. Allow climbing on all aspects of mountain, Shumont and Round Top top too.
154	Keep the Mountain Bike trail system fairly independent from the standard hiking trails to minimize family hiking on the mountain bike trails.
155	Keep the visitor's center small. If you have one huge parking lot and visitor's center then the crowds will be congested there. I suggest a small visitors center, if any, any multiple small parking lots instead of one huge one.



## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

156	Lets get some mtn bike trails built. I would like to see shuttle type trails. Start at the top ride down than either have a personal shuttle or even a park shuttle for a small fee.
157	Limited use pass system can be used for any sensitive areas. Making the trail a bit longer for is a natural limiting device.
158	listed above
159	Longer (more than 10 miles) of mountain bike trails eventually.
160	Longer bike loop, camping options?
161	Longer biking trail. People who view an area as a "destination venue" for mountain biking will be MUCH more enthusiastic about driving to a venue if there are 20+ miles of trail. 10 miles is a minimum for this kind of attraction.
162	Longer biking trails that cover more area and elevation changes.
163	Longer mountain bike trail alternatives
164	Longer proposed trail.
165	Longer trail option for multi-purposed uses; hiking and biking. When I go to a destination (like Pisgah or Lake Norman State Park today), I would like to ride for at least 20 miles minimum and up to 100 miles combined singletrack/doubletrack.
166	Longer trails
167	Lots of trails and access to bouldering/rock climbing will bring in tourism and funds for conservation. Primitive camping and water would be great for people who travel from out of town to use the park.
168	low-impact single-track mountain biking trails in the conservation plan
169	Lower parking capacity in Orchards
170	Lower the fee per person, per day. For someone who is on a fixed income or low wage it becomes prohibitively expensive.
171	Many miles of biking trails
172	maybe longer bike trails
173	Maybe the picnic area could be farther from the bat cave conservation area. Where people gather and eat, people explore.
174	More ~2-5 hr loop trails.
175	more access to rock climbing
176	More access to the climbing areas in the park to spread out the climbers, increase the climbing options and to reduce impact to the already popular Rumbling Bald climbing areas.
177	More activities with same entrance/exit = more visitors to area year round. Year round activities = year round business
178	more affordable access to the park
179	More and better marked vehicle access
180	More and long bike trails so you could spend the better part of a day there instead of completing the trail in about 90 minutes.
181	More biking and overnight group tent camping
182	More camping options. Review Skyline/Cliff Trail
183	more choices for short and medium length trails with easily accessible trailheads
184	More climbing access and opportunities. Please add drive-in tent camping. My wife and children enjoy camping and it would allow us to visit for a weekend vs. a day trip.
185	More cycling opportunities on the World Edge side.
186	More emphasis on nature beauty seen from 64 & 74
187	more hiking trails in Chimney Rock area
188	More low/high impact activities, year round activities, more kids education
189	More mileage on the Mtn Bike Trails.
190	More mileage added to Mountain Bike Trails
191	More Mountain bike specific trails or shared use with hiking
192	More Mountain Bike Trails
193	more mountain bike trails
194	more mountain bike trails,
195	More mountain bike trails.
196	More Mountain Biking
197	More mountain biking allowed if possible. The impact of bikes in the woods is over estimated by most and if allowed would be a wonderful addition to a beautiful park.
198	More mountain biking trails
199	more mountainbike trails
200	more mtn biking trails

## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

201	More open climbing areas
202	More opportunities for rock climbing! This is an incredible area with the potential for spectacular lines. It would be great if areas that were previously only open for guided groups were opened up to the general public. North Carolina rock climbers as a group tend to be conscientious and I feel they would become a resource that could be tapped to help park officials turn this into a reality. There are several areas in the State that offer reasonable travel and hiking for quality climbing and I really appreciate that; having such a beautiful area in close proximity to the park facilities would make this a top notch destination.
203	More or longer mountain bike trails and drive-up tent camping near an access point to the bike trails
204	More remote access points
205	more rock climbing
206	More rock climbing and mountain biking
207	More smaller parking areas. That helps spread any potential traffic congestion. Similar to how they have it at DuPont State forest.
208	More tent camping.
209	more trails
210	more trails with educational information along the way
211	More trails, more MTB designated trails, more primitive camping.
212	More/shorter trails. The ones proposed seem very long.
213	Mountain Bike Trails
214	Mountain bike trails and climbing access.
215	Mountain bike trails built by professional trail builders under International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) standards for sustainability.
216	Mountain biking and additional hiking in remote areas
217	mountain biking on the sugarloaf side because of driving distance to Shumont biking trails
218	Mountain biking trails
219	Mountain Biking trails and camping
220	Moutain Bike trails
221	Mtn. bike trails
222	My vision of the park has always been expansive vistas, fun trails that aren't accessible to everyone, and the occasional solitude that comes from being there in the early morning before the crowds get there.
223	n/a
224	Need climbing access to Round Top Mtn (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbley. Nothing close is need, but a 1 hr hike max. would be perfect. Also do not see any drive up tent camping (like stone mountain). Maybe I missed it. Also prefer to limit car access to the top of cliffs (ie pilot mountain). Hiking/climbing to the top is good!
225	Need drive in tent camping. If this is to be a "world class" destination, it needs amenities that cater to traveling climbers and other users. Climbers are many times driving in from long distances, they prefer to camp within a reasonable distance from their vehicle because they are tired after a long day of climbing and are not prepared to "backpack" in. Also, Other climbing areas besides the main Rumbling Bald need to be included in the plan. There are several areas in the Gorge with a long history of climbing. The area called Ghost Town or Round Top Mountain is perhaps one of the best areas in the Gorge to climb and has a long history dating back to the 1970's. Access to this area and designation as a climbing area should be a priority. Right now, the land at the base of Ghost Town is for sale. This property was once slated and parceled out for development. It would be a shame for the viewshed from Chimney Rock to be destroyed by homes perched just below the beautiful rock wall of Ghost Town. This land for sale also includes part of the rock wall with several classic climbing routes. It has a large flat area (rare in the Gorge) that would make an excellent access point for climbing and hiking trails to Rainbow Falls and beyond. The land also has a lot of history attached. it used be an amusement park "Silver City" and was the site of the indian encampment in the movie the Last of the Mohicans. The plan as is, has access to Round Top Mountain coming in a hiking trail from Shumont. That trail is about 3 miles to Round Top making it very long and not good access for climbers.
226	need toilet and drinking water facilities at the Rumbling bald access area.
227	new rock climbing areas on chimney rock proper.
228	No 2-day use recreation areas; no extensions of proposed hiking trails; no ten miles of added hiking trails; do not ruin Shumont Mtn; emphasis on the history of tunnel/elevator
229	No changes necessary with a well-designed and built MTB trail system (low impact)
230	No entry fee for Shumont use area or at least just a minimal one but not the \$14 required for traditional park entry to see Chimney Rock. Otherwise use would be very very limited.
231	None
232	none
233	None
234	none
235	Of course the views and hiking are nice, but the rock climbing is world class. Hickory Nut Gorge is a destination already for rock climbers locally, but if all the rock in the gorge and in all the other areas were made accessible, it would become a world class destination for climbers. I would allow climbing on Chimney Rock Park(proper) as well the areas known locally as GhostTown and the Dark Side(north side of Rumbling Bald Mtn all the way to Eagle Rock. Climbing at Eagle rock would be spectacular. This is really all I would add.



## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

236	Open access to all trails and areas now closed. Eg. The Pulpit, The Rock Pile, etc.
237	Open access to the Ghost Town cliffs and the North face of Rumbling Bald. These are two of the finest cliffs in the southeast, better than the existing Rumbling Bald cliff. They offer wonderful diversity of climbing.
238	open areas in camping areas for medicine helicopters//shelters at vistas; 1st aid kits and planes
239	open as many climbing areas as have been used historically for the past 40 years! simple drive in camping is needed.
240	Open back trail to top of falls; keep main visitor center on Hwy 64/74A/9
241	Open Bottomless Pools to the public
242	Open more rock climbing areas. Establish camping areas.
243	Open Round Top Mt
244	open up more rock climbing opportunities
245	Open upper trails ASAP.
246	Opening of the Skyline trail to the top of Hickory nut falls
247	Overnight camping
248	Park should be open for all but should be free or offer a low-priced annual pass for local residents. Wage scales are low in the mountains and we cannot afford to pay 10-20/day. Dupont Forest and the NC Arboretum are heavily by day users and we need a similar facility in this area of the mountains.
249	Perhaps a larger trail network for mountain biking.
250	Please allow unguided rock-climbing. Limiting group use (by guides or clubs), however, is desirable. Climbing plan should ban or limit bolts and pitons. Approach hike should not be too easy to naturally limit crowds.
251	Please build more mountain bike trails. In addition to the mountain bike area, a perimeter trail -- around the whole park -- would be very desirable because it would add more mileage to the mountain biking opportunities in the Park. Since riding in Chimney Rock will require most mountain bikers to drive considerable distances to the trail head/s, more mileage would be greater incentive and draw more people from this user group to the Park. Also, please make the hiking trails accessible to mountain bikers too.
252	please continue to work with Southeastern Climbers Coalition (SEC) and the Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC)
253	Please do not over develop and use solar PV and solar thermal power on buildings.
254	Please include a variety of educational components--not only programs for K-12, but also more informal educational information for casual users of the park.
255	Please open as much area as possible as soon as possible or we will either be too old to enjoy it or dead.
256	Please reinstate the trail to top of the falls- so many people like to return there to revisit memories of childhood.
257	Please reopen Cliff and Skyline Trails with minimum interference - please no more decking in the park. I want my feet to touch the ground when I hike, not wooden decking. Put a fence but don't block views - forest users take on inherent risk when hiking and I don't want access or views blocked because of accidents - we don't permanently close highways do we?
258	PLEASE! Put mountain bike trails in! That would be an amazing addition to an amazing park!
259	plenty of parking; restrooms/changing rooms; water
260	Possible more Mt. bike trails/logging roads
261	Provide access for climbing at Chimney Rock "Ghost Town" area, and north face of Rumbling Bald. Do not add trails at existing Rumbling Bald area - it is not needed. Please limit horse use - they have a large impact.
262	Provide for more family recreational options in the southern area of the park
263	Provide parking for Round Top Mountain, aka Ghost Town climbing area. Allow climbing on the cliffs of chimney rock proper.
264	quite good as presented
265	re open older trails
266	Re-open the Skyline Trail
267	Re-open trails to top of waterfall
268	Re-opening of the cliff trail.
269	re-opening of the two cliff trails is essential, but was left out of all three proposals; better to have official, safe access to the views of the falls, because visitors will go there anyway... better to control the situation through proper planning
270	Reduce driving to the top by having low pollution buses or trans. to the top
271	Regarding climbing, a world class destination which CRSP has potential to be, is only world class if there's a desinated place to camp and have fellowship. You look at other famous climbing destinations whether it be within the NPS, NFS and some state parks nationwide, and there is always a central location to camp and a inexpensive rate. If you want to be on the map for recreation, you've got to have a campground. And the campground has to be seperated between the RV's/Trailers and the tent campers. The worst thing you could do to a campground is have the tent area within hearing distance of the RV area. No one wants to go camp in a tent for the weekend and have to listen to generators and tv's running. Some places really mess up by having the RV's near the tent campers.
272	Reopen the closed area's.
273	Repair, update and Open existing trails that are currently closed to the public. The last time I visited the park in April their was at least 3 trails closed. This is a large % of the trails closed to the public. this is not acceptable to those paying the park fees anticipating the option of several trails to hike.

## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

274	Restricted access/more protection of wildlife; noise reduction
275	Rock and Ice climbing access to the whole park. It is so frustrating to look over and see all that beautiful rock and not be able to climb it (unless you pay a Fox Mountain Guide). As a taxpayer in NC I believe it is unfair that only the people that pay get the 'right' to climb on that side of the gorge. I would look at low impact options to increase the parking area at Rumbling Bald if it is going to be used for multi-use recreation. It is already crowded now. The park superintendent that is usually out there on the weekends is about the nicest lady to run accoss there.
276	rock climbing more accessible. I am a mother and I would love to share this with my children as they become more avid climbers.
277	Rock climbing without the requirement for guides
278	rrrrrrrr
279	See 9.
280	See above.
281	see Question #11
282	Several medium to advanced mountain bike loops. Lots of mileage across varied terrain. Backwoods camping locations near water sources.
283	Short loop trails displaying the unique features of the natural history of the park (geology, flora, fauna).
284	Should have 15 to 25 miles of MTB trails without repeat traversing in the same direction.
285	Showers & changing rooms
286	side trails to special features like waterfalls and view areas, free educational programs
287	Small RV / car camping area; area for primitive camping;All of Rumbling Bald open to climbers;most of Chimney Rock cliffs open to climbing
288	Sort of a fusion between the conservation and low impact plans would be great. If you add in the Chimney Rock State Park hiking trail system through the Orchards and on to worlds edge and the Rumbling Bald and Shumont trail systems with small parking areas and composting toilets at each lot as well as informational naturalistic and interpretive signage along the trails it would be perfect. I do not like the idea of a group campsite in the orchard--a few small primitive campsites near where the old house is in the "lower orchard" and a couple in the woods between the small pond in the "upper orchard" and the TV tower would be ok.
289	tent camping. Rock climbing at Chimney Rock, Round Top Mountain, Shumont Mountain, Rumbling Bald, and Cloven Cliffs
290	The addition of mountain biking trails would bring an additional boost to the area year-round visitation and provide opportunities for new businesses. I also see great opportunities by opening to the public rock climbing in the areas of round top mountain, rumbling bald north face, eagle rock.
291	The beauty of the area is that it rural. If you allow vehicles in the orchard area it will spoil the area to and from the orchards. Hiking and equestrian trails only!!
292	The hiking trails must provide access to key sites especially waterfalls on the Worlds Edge tract and overlooks. The trails can be long to get there to discourage heavy use. The currently closed trails in the existing park need to be reopened. Use the Weed Patch Mountain area for mounitain biking and leave Rumbling Bald for hiking only.
293	The limited park facilities included in Alternative #2 should include some type of bathroom facility to minimize impact in woods. I would like to see the backpacking/camping option in Alternative #3 added to the #2 scenario.
294	The most mountain biking trails possible! Thanks!!
295	The mountain biking trails need to cover more area, instead of being confined to loops in one small area of the park
296	The MTBing trails in the 2 plans are great but for my real money it would be awesome to have a "Downhill Specific" MTB trails with shuttle access like some other recreation areas in Georgia, Tennessee, and West Virginia.
297	The mtn. biking community always participate the most on trail workdays.
298	The park has huge potential for growth in the areas of recreation. If planned out correctly and executed can be enjoyed by many generations to come (by locals and tourist)
299	The plan seems fine. I believe this plan is good because it opens the park to more people. We can preserve the area and still let the current generation enjoy it.
300	The Visitors Center should be located in Chimney Rock or Lake Lure to be more accessible to visitors along the main highway.
301	There are several access points for MTB in the park and I've ridden many different epic loops there. I'd prefer to see MTB trails on the option 1 map, the conversation one, since it is so low impact.
302	There are tons of limited use parks, lets make this a great showcase
303	There needs to be more camping available within the park. Currently there is little to no camping in the area, which makes it difficult for those of us who will drive 3+ hours to visit. The plan shows backpacking and group camping, but does not appear to accommodate individual tent camping use, which is what I would like to see.
304	This is an amazing area with great recreating possibilities. It is centrally located to many southern cities. Not many areas in the South have the potential for so many great outdoor usages. This is the spot for the State to step up and have a mini Yosemite for people of the region to get off their butts and get outside and have an adventure. Lets not isolate future generations from a place to get outdoors instead on computers. This should be the States gift to the southern region.
305	Tie in single track trails off of escape jeep type trails. Build around rock formation, large trees, water, through rock based streams and a mix of flat, and hilly terrain. Have by pass point for harder and more technical pathways and obstacles. Keep technical aspect as natural as possible using existing wood such as cedar, hard woods and rock for terrain changes and variation. Also have long easy runs for recovery and wildlife/scenery enjoyment



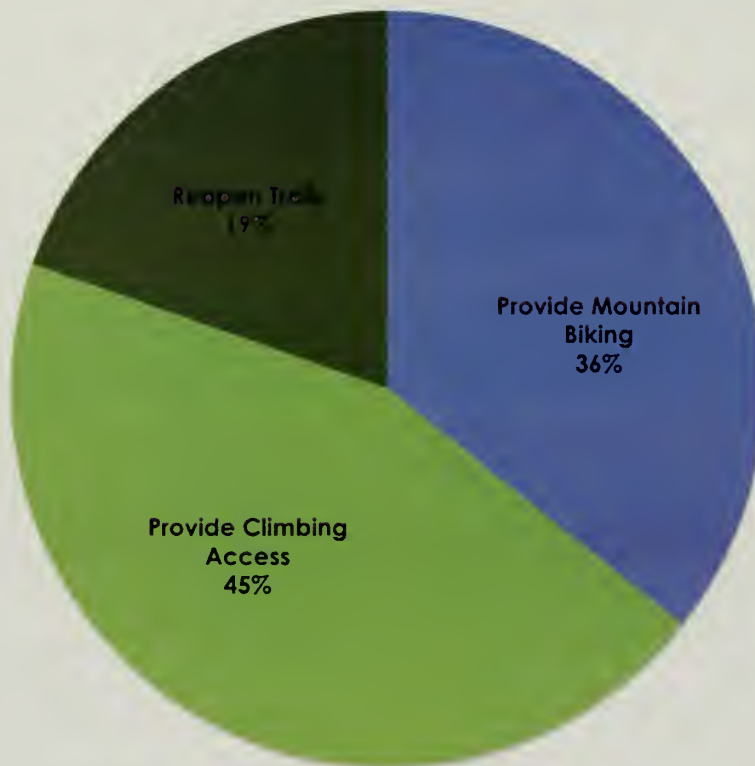


## QUESTION 10 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

306	To destroy as little land as possible to provide for more recreation. Not too much should be done to the park because if too much is added then the park might lose its isolated and peaceful atmosphere.
307	toilet facilities are desperately needed in the Rumbling rock climbing day use area. toilets are needed in the parking area, and should be considered in select areas in the backcountry to reduce pollution
308	Trail accessibility to the top of Hickory Nut Falls and re-opening of the Cliff and Skyline trails.
309	trail loops of 10 miles or more
310	Trail maintenance of the Rumbling Bald area
311	Trails! Long, rugged, western NC trails.
312	unlimited access for climbers
313	upgrade facilities, but do not add more.
314	Use of the old bridge as a walking hiking trail
315	use solar lighting; keep all facilities off the grid; no external light pollution
316	We really need to seriously consider climbing access (both parking, and trails) to the base of Round Top Mtn. The land at the base is owned by the state and has good opportunities for parking lot and trail construction. Round Top has some of the best climbing opportunities on the east coast and would be a considerable attraction to climbers from all around.
317	We would like access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc
318	well defined trailheads and trails that lead to nice lookouts/water/etc.
319	While option 3 presents good recreational opportunity and access, I would recommend the following changes: significantly increase access to climbing areas in the park other than Rumbling Bald; allow and create management plan for light impact back country, off-trail travel; allow and create management plan for seasonal rock climbing access within conservation management areas (World's Edge, Rumbling Bald, Round Top Mtn., etc.); allow and plan for seasonally limited rock climbing access to the Chimney Rock attraction; finally, do not build a new road on the north side of Worlds Edge, i.e., find an alternative route.
320	With this plan, the Meadows could no longer be used as an event field. It would be nice if other areas within this section of the Park could be explored for that purpose. It is difficult for campers, buses and emergency vehicles to navigate the two-way, twisting roadway, especially when they meet guests who are uncomfortable driving on unfamiliar, curvy mountain roads. Another access road could alleviate some of the congestion on either end. I'd like to see the road enter from the Lake Lure end and exit into Chimney Rock Village. Consideration should be given to add Weed Patch Mountain and King tracts to the study area for good mountain biking alternatives. I would like to see State Parks coordinate their trail system with those already being developed for the Lake Lure Summit Trail, the Donald Ross Trails and the Upper Hickory Nut Gorge Trail system so they connect where possible.
321	Would also like to see Weed Patch mountain added to the park, so that the trails could go more around the lake, and to insure the preservation of this tract of land.
322	Would be nice to have parking access to the climbing at the cliffs of Round Top Mtn called Ghost Town.
323	Would have to study a full size map with topo lines to better provide you constructive comments.
324	Would like to see additional mountainbike trails
325	Would like to see all the current hiking trails in Chimney Rock. These upper trails are what people come to Chimney Rock park for.
326	Would like to see my multi-use trails ex. Hiking and Biking
327	Would like to see trails and parking areas for the other cliffs. Also at least 2 car/tent Camping areas. And make area for Mtn biking, similar to Lake Norman or Wilkesboro.
328	Would love more trail and camping close by.
329	Would want to make sure there are official or climber-maintained trails to desirable cliffs for climbing.
330	You need an 'even more intensive use' plan which in my vision would include year-round lodging, a reasonably upscale restaurant, and a craft center located behind Chimney Rock potentially near The World's Edge.
331	You still lack a car camping campground. The private campgrounds are terrible for tent campers (ie winter climbing tourists). What about Ghost Town facilities?

## QUESTION 11 (OPEN-ENDED): DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS AT THIS TIME?

(graph shows top results, individual responses are listed on the following pages)



### QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

1	<p>1. I would like access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc. The park is aware of most of the areas outside of Rumbling Bald where routes have been established.</p> <p>2. Opening more cliffs will mean a) reduced impact on the already hammered Rumbling Bald, as our numbers would spread over a larger area, b) year-round visitors to the park, and c) increased economic activity for the surrounding community.</p> <p>3. New routing should be allowed to continue in the park. If the only way to get FAs allowed is a permitting system, those have proven effective elsewhere.</p> <p>4. We are a low impact user group. All we really need to practice our sport are trails, water, parking and camping. For good climbing we'll hike. Visual and environmental impact can be mitigated through intelligent trail building, permitting, cliff-top anchors, etc. And we can be counted on to volunteer, building trails, picking up trash, etc.</p>
2	<p>1. Please consider access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc.</p> <p>2. Opening more cliffs will mean a) reduced impact on Rumbling Bald, as our numbers would spread over a larger area, b) year-round visitors to the park, and c) increased economic activity for the surrounding community.</p> <p>3. New routing should be allowed to continue in the park.</p> <p>4. Climbers are a low impact user group. We need trails, water, parking and camping.</p>
3	<p>1. We would like access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc. The park is aware of most of the areas outside of Rumbling Bald where routes have been established.</p> <p>2. Opening more cliffs will mean a) reduced impact on the already hammered Rumbling Bald, as our numbers would spread over a larger area, b) year-round visitors to the park, and c) increased economic activity for the surrounding community.</p> <p>3. New routing should be allowed to continue in the park. If the only way to get FAs allowed is a permitting system, those have proven effective elsewhere.</p> <p>4. We are a low impact user group. All we really need to practice our sport are trails, water, parking and camping. For good climbing we'll hike. Visual and environmental impact can be mitigated through intelligent trail building, permitting, cliff-top anchors, etc. And we can be counted on to volunteer, building trails, picking up trash, etc.</p>



## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

4	A comment I wanted to add from my previous survey--This park is unique in that it is where the foothills meet the mountains. The peaks afford views not seen by peaks deeper into the mountains. From Chimney Rock, Shumont, and World's Edge, one can see all the way to Charlotte. It is a wonderful view of the topography of this area of the foothills and the highest peaks of Mount Mitchell. The rock formations are unique as well. There are wonderful opportunities for photography. The park will afford trails for those who are in the foothills with a minimal drive.
5	Add a low impact biking trail for families or a dual use trail to include biking for families
6	Again, PLEASE RE-OPEN THE SKYLINE TRAIL and raise rates to offset the cost to rebuild the Cliff Trail. Please, please, please do not allow car camping. These sites are prone to litter, alcohol use and more rowdy behavior. Just my opinion. Also, I am not in favor of building more access roads unless absolutely unavoidable because it will contribute to the destruction of more natural areas and will displace wildlife.
7	Allowing climbers into the park will provide revenue, and climbers are a group with a typically very low impact and little demand for facilities/paved roads/etc.
8	Alt.2:Do not transform the road; especially a two-way road to Lake Lure! no camping; do not build new trails from VC that threaten habitats, environ.;do NOT open up day use areas at World's Edge; please leave Shumont Mtn/Rumbling Bald along;NO MNT. BIKING, NO ADDED ROCK CLIMBING, NO NEW TRAILS and absolutely NO TO EVERYTHING IN ALT. 3
9	Although normally desirable at a state park of this size, I do not believe a traditional tent and trailer camp ground is appropriate for the topography of this park. Walk-in style campsites, like those at Lake James State Park or Mount Mitchell State Park, and back-pack campsites, like those at Stone Mountain State Park or Morrow Mountain State Park, are the most fitting and desirable forms of camping for this park. I believe Chimney Rock can accommodate both.I LOVE the large bicycle parking area and bike lanes proposed for "The Meadows" Visitor Center design. State Parks should be inviting places to travel to by alternate methods of transportation where practicable, and I think this is a step in that direction.
10	As a longtime member of the local climbing community, I am committed to helping ensure access and positive management of the resources located in the park. I urge the consideration of access to already developed climbing areas within the park, along with the construction of quality trails and trail systems to access these cliffs in a manner that protects the ecosystems surrounding these cliffs. I would also encourage that the park allows continued new route development in these areas, and if there needs to be a management system regarding new routes, there are examples of successful models that already exist.
11	As a member of both TORC (Triangle Off Road Cyclists) and CCC (Carolina Climbers Coalition), what a great opportunity to speak up for this plan and represent these groups.
12	As a rock climber, I am excited about increasing access to the cliffs of Chimney Rock. I would like access to all of the rock in the gorge, especially areas that are already developed or in development such as Ghost Town, Cloven Cliffs, Eagle Rock, The Dark Side, etc. Climbing is a low-impact activity that respects and maintains the natural environment. All we really need to practice our sport are trails, water, parking and camping. The climbing community is willing and ready to volunteer, building trails, picking up trash, etc.
13	As a trail builder in Greensboro who has put in many hours of volunteer labor I can attest to the low impact mountain bike trails can have on the land and environment. Properly built trails are sustainable and long lasting and afford little to no erosion concerns. Mountain Bike Trails are proven to be low impact when built in accordance with IMBA (International Mountain Bicycling Assn.) standards.
14	As an avid climber, I would like to have access to any and all rock within the boundaries of the park. This includes walls, boulders, currently established routes and new route potential. Climbers, as a whole, are a relatively low impact group that would have no problems assisting with trail maintenance and development. Bolted anchors at the tops of climbs would reduce impact to the ground on top of the cliff. Personally, I would like to have access to rock via good, maintained trails not by a road that leads straight up to the base of the cliff. Climbers I know would be willing to hike long distances if the climbing were good. (which it obviously is in the park) It should be noted that if there is more rock opened then the enormous impact to the already existing Rumbling Bald would be drastically decreased. I would definitely, 100%, support a fee for access to the park. I would be willing to pay up to \$60 a year to have unlimited access. I am originally from Fort Collins, Colorado and this is a big part of how climbing areas that are visited by large numbers of people are funded and supported. Thank you for requesting the input of the public into your decisions for the future of this area.
15	Being able to bring the Park up to standards without closing the park should be the first element of any plan - protect not only the Chimney Rock Park eco system but the economic stability of the surrounding areas. Revitalizing the current entrance to be one way to the Meadows Welcome/Education Center before the fee entrance to the park and having the road exit to Lake Lure makes good sense. The beautiful original entrance is too crowded for both directions. Having controlled camping and Hiking trails on the other side of the Mtn is a great use for all in such a beautiful area. There are trails such as Skyline, Exclamation Point that if properly fitted for safety would once again be the draw for so many people to get such views of our beautiful State! Short and long hiking trails so all will have the opportunity to be IN the park!
16	Bicycle lanes around Chimney Rock/Lake Lure would be very beneficial. I think catering to cyclist could really change the demographics and improve the local economy. There are not many places where you can go stay and bike from your hotel room.
17	Building a road from Lake Lure up to Sugarloaf Mountain is a horrible idea. Very costly, ruins mountain. RV camping is a bad idea. Keep the wilderness, feel as much as possible with impact. NO 4-wheelers! Make day use fees low
18	Camping and showers for the mtn bikingtrail would be swell
19	Chimney Rock has some of the best rock climbing available in the Southeast. Continued access to this resource should be prioritized in the current planning effort, especially at places like Ghost Town, Eagle Rock, and the Dark Side. Beyond these areas, new route development should be allowed in accordance with North Carolina climbing ethics. In NC, climbers are generally a low-impact group. All that climbers need are access trails, which can be maintained in part by climbers themselves. The NC ethic generally dictates a minimum of fixed hardware. Where necessary, climbers work constructively with park management to minimize impacts through smart anchor placement (e.g. Ship Rock). The climbing community can be counted on for trail days and has a proven record, through the CCC, of working to preserve natural resources across the state park system. By opening additional cliff areas to climbing, there is also the potential to spread climbers across a wider range of resources, thereby reducing impacts in any given areas (e.g. Rumbling Bald proper). In general, no further "recreational facilities" need to be built for climbers. Because of the different cliff faces in Chimney Rock, climbing is possible year round. Expanding opportunities for this type of low-impact recreation could be an important economic resource for the surrounding community.
20	Chimney Rock Park is part of this community. I would like activities at the park that would bring people in to help the small business in Chimney Rock.
21	Chimney Rock State Park (I prefer Hickory Nut Gorge State Park) is a world class rock climbing destination(s). There is a lifetime of rock climbing here. Please let us (climbers) be part of the experience. Thank You

## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

22	Chimney Rock State Park could be a world class climbing destination with amazing year round climbing. Climbers, properly managed, can be a highly conscientious, low impact user group. If major portions of the private park are open for climbing, CRSP could become the premiere rock climbing destination in the SE. This will bring year-round revenue to NC. In addition, rock climbers require only a few facilities in order to practice their recreation: toilets, a parking lot, hiking trails and camping. Too boot, the hiking trails can be long. We will walk a long, long way for good climbing. Note the hike to Laurel Knob or to various crags in Linville Gorge.
23	Chimney Rock State park is a beautiful park. I hope your plans allow for increased access for climbers. We are a relatively low-impact user group, and can work with the park for trail days and clean-up as needed.
24	Chimney Rock Village depends on the entrance/exit remaining where it is
25	Climbers have an economic impact in the off-season (winter)
26	Climbers make up the single largest user group, use them to your advantage, larger access equals less impact on high use areas now. Seasonal openings could help both Low and Intensive use.
27	Climbing access is very important. The economic impact of climbers could be significant if properly supported. Rumbling Bald is a nationally known climbing area. Climbing access to Ghost Town (aka Silver City) is important as well as Eagle Rock and North Side of Rumbling Bald Mountain
28	Climbing access to Round top mountain is a priority. Opening up commercial climbing access at the Chimney Rock to the public is essential. Tent camping for traveling climbers will be an essential part of making Chimney Rock Park the international climbing destination that it can be.
29	Climbing at other areas in the 'park' needs to be addressed. That would lessen the impact of a large number of people on a small area.
30	Connect as much as possible CRSP trails with Lake Lure. Town trail system and greenways (including Donald Ross Nature Trail Park and new nature trail park on Buffalo Creek and Weed Patch Mtn.
31	Consider adding part or all of the Weed Patch Mountain tract for hiking, primitive camping, and more extensive mountain biking.
32	Currently all the other states in this region (GA, SC, TN, VA, etc...) have mountain biking opportunities in their state parks. NC has next to nothing when it comes to mountain biking in state parks. It's time to wake up and realize that mountain biking is a huge sport and the demand for mountain biking trails needs to be addressed by the state parks department. Mountain bike trails were the most requested activity in the recent survey conducted by the NC State Parks. I don't see how a token trail meets the apparent needs of the state.
33	Decision Maker: One of the most beautiful trails in all of North Carolina is the trail at Chimney Rock where a portion of the movie "The Last Of the Mohicans" was done. The cliff trail affords beautiful vistas and unique hiking opportunities. It is a shame that it is not being used because of its condition. Please find it in the budget somewhere to repair it and make it serviceable again. I am sure its availability will enhance the new visitors' desire to want to return to the park and bring other friends and family members with them. Please make this a priority on the list of those projects that will be funded first.
34	don't want tons of trails, but maybe good close to visitor's centers. more backcountry trails and more rock climbing
35	Due to nearness of fault line, would suggest lodging not be placed on top of Chimney Rock. Utilize wind mills (2-4) to generate electricity for part of town. Develop a hotel/conference center similar to Stone Mountain State Park in Atlanta, GA Provide income to State Park & Town of Lake Lure
36	enlarge parking area @ R.Bald,
37	Feels like more options for trail use (e.g. mtb) are in existence elsewhere with no long term downside... why not do it here too?
38	For how, why not get the Skyline and the Cliff trails opened back up, then you can work on the other plans
39	Good Job ! Concerning discussion about the two road options into the Orchard and new Visitor's center, it is stated that using the existing road corridor would require a longer drive. This is only true from the perspective of Lake Lure and points north. It would be a shorter way in for folks coming from Henderson County and points south.
40	Guides or rangers responsible for the protection of the park need training before they assume duties. Often it is necessary for naturalists (or specialist botanists & zoologists) to help in preseason workshops. Geologists could also help with the physical land form and rock types of the Park.
41	Has access been considered to Girl Scout Camp Road and Hwy 9 South?
42	Having never been to Chimney Rock I can't speak to the current conditions, but would like to see the park be in as natural a state as possible. The plans look great...good work!
43	Hickory Nut Gorge has a huge amount of climbing resources. Rock Climbing has a long history of being a permitted use at several other NC State Parks (Stone Mountain, Crowders, Hanging Rock) and we've enjoyed a good relationship with the Park Service. The climbing community has performed several service projects in all these parks which shows we are a responsible user group. The Carolina Climbing Coalition has even purchased property that we plan to donate to Chimney Rock State Park. We would like to see it continue and even be expanded with the new park. Our climbing resources are limited on the East Coast so any public land that has such a vast resource of climbing available should be utilized to the full extent to provide the climbing community with several options. The climbers do not need vehicular access to all the climbing areas and are willing to hike to get to the cliffs, therefore we don't need alot of infrastructure. All we need is permission to climb. We can even partner with the Park Service to help with planning, trail building and fund raising. Recreational opportunities should be maximized in the park with an emphasis on active recreation such as rock climbing, hiking, and mountain biking. With the central location of the new park it would be great to see a long range plan with priorities set and improvements made incrementally instead of trying to decide the future of the Park based on the funds available at this time. This is a great opportunity to develop a Park that will be a crown jewel in the NC Park System much like some of the great national parks (Yosemite, Yellowstone, etc...) Please do not limit the climbing to just the areas that are permitted now. We feel that would be very short sighted and a disservice to the recreational community. A lot of the areas that access is not mentioned in the plans has a long history of climbing already (Ghost Town, Cloven Cliff, etc...) To not allow climbing in these areas would be akin to erasing history. Also I would like to see some type of camping in the park. While I am a proponent of conservation I feel there are more remote units of the State Park system that are more suited for conservation
44	Horse-back riding trails would be a welcome addition. I prefer that the skylounge stay as is.
45	How about some mtn bike trails. Preferably the a few trails where you could start at the top ride down than either shuttle back up or push.



## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

46	I am looking for the experience of hiking, climbing and biking this land has to offer (with a better trail system) rather than a grand entrance gate to shuffle through.
47	I believe that state parks should be developed both to allow for recreation and to allow for conservation. Chimney Rock State Park is large enough to allow for both.
48	I believe that the Intensive Use plan should NEVER be an option for the future of CRSP. It would ruin the beauty and specialness of this unique gem of a state park and make it nothing more than an overrun and degraded redneck weekend party place hangout. I am worried about the impact that a 300 car parking lot would have on the large Timber Rattlesnake and Eastern Box Turtles populations in the orchards area. I studied those reptiles for many years and if a parking lot and campground were constructed in the orchards the populations would greatly suffer from the human encroachment and habitat destruction.
49	I did not expect to favor the more intensive plan #3, but find that it is sensitively planned. it makes the most opportunities for the most number of users over the extensive park acreage.
50	I do encourage all the improvements you want to make other than removing the restaurant and changing the Cliffs Trail. Also I don't approve of the major renovations that adversely affect the surroundings too much.
51	I do not think that access to areas should be based on the poor judgment of a few. Simply marking certain trails to prohibit young children or persons of limited physical abilities should suffice. The draw of this park is the spectacular views and hiking trails (prior to closing skyline) that are unique to this location. I do not think there is a need or a way to improve upon what nature has already provided. Simple signs to point out different geologic features and flora unique to this location would be low cost and low impact improvement.
52	I don't know that the camping area off the mountain bike trails will be used by bikers. Was this for bikers or for hikers that will use the trail as well? Showers, even primitive ones would be helpful.
53	I don't see why mountain bikes are not included in the conservation focused plan. I don't understand why many of the proposed trails in all the plans are not open to mountain bikes.
54	I have been climbing at Rumbling Bald for 12 years. I am a founding member of the Rutherford Outdoor Coalition. I am a teacher in the community and I am invested in this region.
55	I have been coming to the area (mostly Rumbling Bald) for hiking and climbing for the past 5 years both personally and guiding ADHD students. I have seen the personal growth that climbing can bring to individuals and have seen how groups of climbers can work to protect areas (the CCC). Having more climbing access would attract climbers from around the nation to Lake Lure. Rumbling Bald itself has already done this but more access would bolster activity and spread it out, alleviating some of the impact of large crowds up at the Bald. For local climbing compaines, camps, and people like me who show kids with behaviorial challenges the positive impact self confidence can have through rock climbing, more access would provide a greater resource. I would love to see the rock faces of Chimney Rock State Park and the ajacent rock faces open to climbing.
56	I have children and would hope a place with so much outdoor recreation possibilities will allow true outdoor adventure for the future generations to enjoy. Chimney Rock has the potential to be NC State Park's great outdoor playground, and its crown jewel State Park. I would hate to see the potential wasted. I understand conservation but the future generations need a place to play in the outdoors instead of inside on computers and video games.
57	I have traveled throughout the USA and the World rock climbing, and I am confident in writing that the Hickory Nut Gorge hosts some of the best winter rock climbing and bouldering in the Country. We have seen the increasing usage that Rumbling Bald has been receiving as evidence of this. If Ghost Town (Round Top Mountain) was open, as well as other areas of cliffs and boulders in the proposed Round Top Mountain Conservation MGMT Area, the HNG would really be a National climbing destination. Climbers positively contribute to conservation - just look at the work that the Access Fund does, as well as the American Alpine Club and equipment manufacturers such as Black Diamond. Besides the responsible stewardship that climbers bring, increased climber traffic typically benefits the local economy.
58	I like a climbing management plan should be considered. We are a low impact activity and would be a great asset to the local community and the park. Chimney Rock has some of the best rock in NC and it would be a shame not to have it be climbed in a responsible way.
59	I Like whichever alternative opens up the most climbing.
60	I listed the conservation-focused park as my least preferred option only because it lacks bike trails. I am enthusiastic supporter of conservation efforts otherwise.
61	I live in pa and would travel down to the area just to climb at chimney rock
62	I participate in a number of outdoor activities but I am foremost a rock climber, and have been for over 20 years. I moved to this area (Henderson county) specifically for climbing, and live just 30 minutes away from Hickory Nut Gorge. I have climbed extensively in Hickory Nut Gorge, as well as around the country and can confidently state that many of us climbers can easily envision Chimney Rock State Park as a world class climbing destination if more of the state own cliffs in the gorge (if not all of them) were accessible to climbers. I understand the need to protect the endangered resources, but feel that a balance of conservation and recreation could easily be achieved with the informed and appropriate planning. I would be happy to help in anyway that I could, from planning to volunteer trail building. Thank you for your time.
63	I personally enjoy longer hike through moderate and difficult terrain. I also enjoy the option to have an overnight camping location on a trail that is still primitive in nature.
64	I previously maintained a section of the AT for the Carolina Mtn Club & worked as a Civil Engineer for Charlotte before retiring. Would consider providing more input if needed.
65	I rarely visit the park, however it's because it has very little that makes it worth even a 45min drive. With upwards of 20+miles of MTB trail, this could be a great alternative to Wilsons Creek or having to drive past Asheville.
66	I really appreciate the idea of updating existing facilities and using already flattened, somewhat clear land to minimize impact. We can still have great trails, climbing access, space for mountain biking, all of that - without a huge amount of impact. I would like to see other smaller parking areas strewn about to provide a way to spread out the parking issue.
67	I recommend inviting the outdoor professionals at local Universities to provide feedback and get the temperature of the current needs in Outdoor Recreation.
68	I think even if a conservation approach is selected, there is no reason for mountain bikes not to be included. They are quiet and clean, and in my opinion should be considered in the same category as other foot-powered traffic, i.e. hikers.

## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

69	I think it is a shame that the state close the upper skyline cliff trail - this trail was not for children under 8 and now we all pay - I quit going because of the skyline trail being closed and all my friends say the same -- I have lived in Lake Lure for 63 yrs and this closing has killed the true meaning of CR. The state does not have any idea what this means to a native LL some figure head behind a desk is thought it would be a good idea to close the trail now -- damage to our area. The area where the movie was shot you cannot see now thanks to an irresponsible person not taking care of his/her child a 3/4 yr old does not need to be walking the top trail alone. DUH ---now we pay -- I will never go to CRP again until the cliff trail is open again nor anyone who I come in contact with
70	I think it is great that you are turning this area into a State Park. This is only about 45 minutes from my home in Spartanburg.
71	I think Raleigh/Greenways should listen to the actual people in this community, not Raleigh in what the people want because we know we live here, and Chimney Rock is crucial to this county.
72	I thought the changes to the parking at Rumbling Bald were positive and negative. At first it appeared that parking had been drastically improved. But then the park service blocked off a large area of cleared land with posts, shrinking the parking area. Why would you clear all those trees, grade the land, then block it off? That does not make sense. I hope any additional development is done intelligently.
73	I travel to western NC to go climbing multiple times per year, but usually go to areas with larger climbing areas. Opening up the available climbing area within Chimney Rock Park would definitely make it a more attractive option for me.
74	I was glad to see mountain biking in the proposed plan. I wish there could be more on the Henderson County side.
75	I was very disappointed last time I visited the park. The best parts of the park were closed and it was a huge disappointment after driving long hours to get there and bragging about the closed parts to the visitor that I brought along (I often do that). I don't see why they were closed. If it were safety then the entire park system in the country needs to shut down because someone clumsy will get hurt no matter what. Get people to sign a waiver and let them enjoy the park as it was before the state took over.
76	I wasn't able to get enough info from the charts to answer the questions above - a text description of the differences would be useful. I would like to see a mountain biking trails option.
77	I wasn't sure of the difference between the Low impact and Intensive choices... looked like intensive maximized Hiking and Mountain biking opportunity. Look at Douthat in VA as a model of a good state park with lots to do.
78	I wish to see a strong blend of alt. 1 and 2. I'd love to have a 40 mile-long trail that circumnavigates Lake Lure. A mini Appalachian Trail of sorts.
79	I would favor the re-opening of the historic trails between Chimney Rock and Hickory Falls -- both the cliff-top trail and the cliff-face trail. To do this, it will be ESSENTIAL to provide adequate safety fencing & railing. I recognize that these trails compromise the natural character of the spectacular scenic treasures comprising the environs of Chimney Rock, but I believe that given the long history of use of these trails, it is appropriate to retain them -- since they provide access to some of the most breath-taking scenery to be found in this part of the world.
80	I would like to comment on the concern for the bike trails being properly designed. If they are designed in a manner like the Watershed trails, they will have low impact and be compatible with resource protection.
81	I would like to preserve and maintain the current climbing and bouldering at Rumbling Bald, and also establish new climbing sites at Chimney Rock, Round Top Mountain, Shumont Mountain, and Cloven Cliffs.
82	I would like to see access for climbing built into any plan for the area. While climbers do come with footprint issues (parking), they have the least impact upon the area of any outdoor recreation group.
83	I would like to see better access to the Dark side (north side of Rumbling Bald), and the Ghosttown climbing areas.
84	I would like to see increased climbing and increased mountain biking.
85	I would like to see the park be open about any reasons that they may choose to limit access to any areas of the park. If access is limited then the reason behind this decision should be given to the general public so they can better understand why. If it is because of a rare plant and/or animal the park should voice this and educate the users as to why this certain resource is significant enough to limit access. If people are given the reason behind a decision they are more likely to comply with the rules.
86	I would like to see the trails that were available at Chimney Rock park when it was privately owned reopened asap. Such as the skyline-cliff trail loop and all the features that used to be open on the outcroppings trail such as the Needle's eye. Whatever alternative is chosen and I really hope it is not Alt 1, I hope it gets done soon.
87	I would like to see this area be a special area for outdoor enthusiasts. I prefer it not to be "Disney Land", but would love to bring my kids to hike, climb, and bike which this Park has all the natural resources to be very special. I work for the National Park Service and believe in Land Conservation, but would like to see this middle alternative for people to enjoy the area. Plus a lot of the area already has old road beds and trails so it's not as if they have to use heavy impact to create these outdoor recreating activities, such as mountain biking, climbing, or hiking. I hope it provides the youth with opportunities that inspire awe and keep them active as we continue toward a more technology-based society.
88	I would love to hear proposed time lines.
89	I would love to talk with you.
90	I would really like to see the Skyline Trail open again.
91	I'd like to see more smaller facilities (parking, trails, restrooms) scattered throughout the park, instead of the capital-intensive visitor center at the orchards. The park is centrally located to Atlanta, Charlotte, Asheville, Triad, and Triangle. Because of this, I'd like to see the entire park open and developed for recreation. There are other State Park properties more remote and more suitable for conservation. Chimney Rock has so much recreation potential, it should be developed accordingly. I'd like to see more camping opportunities, including backcountry (primitive) camping. There are many rock climbing opportunities. Therefore, there is an opportunity to develop many scattered climbing areas to disperse the crowds and minimize impacts.
92	I'd love to help volunteer with the layout of the MTB trail system.
93	I'm in the group that prefers tight singletrack mountain biking. It is much easier on my joints, even the rough trails like in Pisgah. I've been hiking/biking all around since the early 80's. The remote feeling of backcountry trails is what I prefer, no matter the mode of getting there. My buddies and I definitely travel to destination locations and spend money in the local economies (food, gas, beverages, etc).
94	I'm planning on visiting the Chimney Rock area a couple times again this year and will do in the future. Thanks for considering my thoughts.



## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

95	I've been told that there is some resistance at the State level to incorporating mountain bike trails into park master plans. It seems there are those that feel mountain bike trails have a negative impact to park resources. I respectfully disagree. Mountain bike trails, when properly designed and constructed, have no more of an impact than hiking trails. I cite as an example Lake Crabtree park in Raleigh, NC where the local chapter of the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) works closely with park management to ensure low impact. IMBA also has volunteers to patrol the trail networks regularly and report any issues to park management. This is a perfect example of how the mountain bike community can be a resource for park management to maintain a healthy trail network for bikers and hikers to enjoy.
96	If access is to be to the top, consider a tram to reduce pollution from cars
97	If access to all available climbing was opened, it would make Lake Lure an international climbing destination, boosting visitation and local economy. The resource is here, climbers need little more than access and marked trees for a trail.
98	If horses are going to be allowed, please have them have a "bun bag" so that the rest of trail users are not forced to deal with the "mess" and flies that come along with horse droppings.
99	If you add destination level mountain biking trails I will make at least 6 trips a year, staying the night in the area. I don't come to the area at all now.
100	In the conservation focused park, mountain biking should be included since it is such a low impact activity
101	It's a great park already, but could be improved by making points of interest available. (see above)
102	It's important to note that hikers and trail runners are also welcome and enjoy single track mountain bike trails. These trails have a minimal impact on the natural resources of the area.
103	Just make sure there are some trails that accommodate elderly people and dogs. My dog can't do the steps anymore.
104	Keep it simple so that funding is minimal. Get volunteers to help maintain. Charlotte area mountain bikers would gladly help out.
105	Keep the current viable, bio-diverse, WHOLE ecosystem of the gorge as protected and preserved as possible. Do NOT fragment or crowd it!
106	Keep the natural setting and beautiful views of the park. If you decide to include camping areas, I feel you should keep it limited to primitive camping that would not obstruct or destroy the beauty with RV parking areas and large parking lots. RV's would require new alternative roads to accommodate these larger vehicles and would add additional negative impacts to the natural settings that draws us to the park in the first place.
107	Keep the Visitor Center in town to allow for recreation in the park. Nothing in alternative #3 should be implemented (make it conservation focused)
108	Leave the site to a qualified developer and use proceeds to develop the park.
109	Less automobile access, more hiking/biking access. No horse access.
110	Look forward to the expansion of this part for both hiking and hopefully biking as well.
111	Love the area and am happy to see it in the hands of the state. Glad to see public comments are being taken.
112	make Chimney Rock Park have mountain bike trails
113	Make sure all trails are well marked and given evaluations of difficulty, etc.
114	Make the "CR" loop trail 1st priority and start with sections nearest the town to bring commercial traffic to restaurants, etc.
115	make this a ten year plan and add trails as the economy improves and interest develops
116	more mtn biking trails
117	Mountain Biking
118	Mountain biking is a proven low impact non-motorized recreation that is equal to hiking in its impact. This recreation is a valid source of revenue for SP's to seriously consider in the state of NC.
119	Mountain biking is a very low-impact activity in terms of its effect on soil and erosion - significantly lower than equestrian use, often lower than hiking. Mountain bikers are a dedicated and responsible group of people who frequently volunteer to construct, maintain, and repair trails. Quality mountain biking trails attract riders from great distances, providing a significant economic benefit to the area.
120	MOUNTAIN BIKING PLEASE!
121	mountain biking would be ok too
122	MTB trails when designed by a group such as IMBA are low impact and are in line with conservation and resource protection. They also add to the overall experience of a park such as Chimney Rock by opening it up to another group that is park and nature friendly.
123	Must have access to the top of Round Top Mtn
124	My family and I visited for the first time earlier this month, and we loved it. I'd hate to see any additional structures on the site, and feel that more efforts should go towards expanding the trail system and climbing/hiking opportunities. If the facility can permit additional traffic, I'd love to see the day use fee come down to below \$10. At the moment, the rates are beyond my budget tolerance for "regular usage" of Chimney Rock Park.
125	My grandfather's 1st cousin, J.B. "Rome" Freeman, was the first to develop Chimney Rock as a tourist attraction in 1900, selling it to Lucius Morse about 1903. Some acknowledgment of his accomplishments might be given at a visitor's center. His g-grandson, Jimmy Freeman (star@brinet.com), could provide further information.
126	My main concern with the Intensive Recreation option is that the increased day use could end up with more crowds around popular climbing areas. I would like to see more climbing areas be developed to spread out the impact. In looking at mixed use areas it is important to make sure horses and mountain bikes aren't on the same trails as climbers (who often have dogs, etc.)
127	My primary use would be for rock climbing opportunities. I'd like to see as low an impact as possible, while still allowing climbing access to the many cliffs. This would provide a great addition to the great climbing at Rumbling Bald and likely allow the two to be climbed in different seasons (winter for RB and summer at CRSP)
128	My priorities for the park are rock climbing, camping, and mtn biking.
129	natural walks and staff botanist and biologist to assure that environmentally sensitive niches are not computerized (limited access)

## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

130	Non Climber's should know that NC is a goldmine of great climbing already. The addition of chimney rock would make the area a climber's hub and thus help stimulate the local economy
131	not enough room.
132	not sure what the differences were between the different options.
133	Offer golf cart type shuttle to bottom of falls for people that can't walk it.
134	One of the loveliest areas in the U.S. and we have been in every state but Hawaii.
135	Open access for non-guided rock climbing in all areas of the park, not just Rumbling Bald Mountain is my top priority.
136	Open park to mountain bikes please!
137	open the park to climbing w/o Fox Mountain Guides
138	open the trail to the falls again
139	Open up as much of the parks as soon as possible. We need the parks to open now!!!!
140	open up more rock climbing opportunities
141	Opening the climbing on the N. End of Rumbling Bald, Chimney Rock and Round Top Mountain are extremely important in dispersing the climbing traffic at Rumbling Bald proper, which is sure to grow as this park expands
142	Opening the gorge to more extensive climbing would non-consumptively increase the use potential of this stunning natural resource.
143	make them multi use trails.
144	Our mountain roads are not built to handle large RVs and heavy traffic. There are numerous private campgrounds for RVers. I prefer the Low Impact choice.
145	Over the past 30 years, I climbed a great deal in the park as part of the Black Dome Guides for exhibition purposes. There are some areas that I would not recommend for rock climbing due to the location of the tourist trail and the risk of rock fall hazard. However, there are other areas that would work well. All the cliffs west of the falls would be a good example.
146	Overnight camping and open cliff access would make this a mecca for climbers all over the country.
147	Parking areas need to be clearly marked for users to understand what is expected. There is significant demand for rustic camping locations in the area.
148	Placing visitors centers/access off of Proctor Rd (C Ave) would be cost-prohibitive, environmentally destructive, and potentially dangerous unless Proctor Rd is significantly widened (expensive) and/or rerouted so that it doesn't go through the congestion of the Lake Lure Inn parking lot, Lake Lure town Recycling and Maintenance areas, and the Arcade's commercial area (also expensive).
149	Plan alternative #3 seems to violate the intent of the many donors who contributed to CMCC's and TNC's acquisition of property for the park. It is environmentally tragic.
150	Please allow bike access on existing roads and add more mountain biking in the park - Contact SORBA/IMBA for help with trail design/funding and maintenance. IMBA.org
151	Please allow for and consider all opportunities that allow for low impact human powered recreation even in/especially in remote access areas.
152	Please consider climbing as a major component of this project. The Carolina Climbers Coalition was formed over this piece of land and I feel they have done nothing but show the importance of this tract to climbers and built a good relationship with current and past land managers. Climbers as a user group are a great asset to any park...they contribute time and money, like trail days and fundraisers, and are incredible stewards of the land! I am also an avid mountain biker and like the idea of adding bike trails. This is another user group that tends to contribute to trail work and fundraising. I would like to see at least 2 loops available to bikes in the tract...one easier 5 mile loop and a tougher 10 mile loop. Along with some paved bike paths in the other areas, I think this would provide enough opportunity for all levels of mtn bikers. I cant tell you how excited i am about this project and hope that climbing and biking become the 2 major attractions for this area!!!
153	Please consider gates at existing entry points. The normal sentiment now: "it is state property, I can do what I want!"
159	Please consider that climbers have been visiting all of the cliffs of the gorge for over 40 years so there is a great history and passion for the climbing resources here. As a climber, I hope to see a new era in access for climbers in Chimney Rock State Park.
159	Please don't restrict the climbing access to a guided service like Fox Mountain guides. We all pay taxes and we all should have equal access without paying ridiculous prices for a guide. For mountain biking trail building you might consider getting IMBA expert trail builders involved.
156	Please ensure climbing access to Rumbling Bald, Chimney Rock, etc. These are world class climbing areas
157	Please feel free to contact our local International Mountain Bike Association chapter <a href="http://www.pisgahareasorba.org/?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage">http://www.pisgahareasorba.org/?option=com_content&amp;view=frontpage</a>
158	Please incorporate mountain bike trails into the Conservation Focused plan as well as the 2 other plans.
159	Please keep in mind that a properly designed bike trail is low impact and compatible with resource protection. Tent-only camping is also low impact compared to trailer camping.
160	Please open all the trails in the Park as soon as you can. All these closure have a big impact on the economy of Chimney Rock Village
161	Please open the upper cliff trails!!
162	Please re-open the Cliff and Skyline Trails and create new trails. There are not enough availability activities within the park.
163	Please reopen the Skyline-Cliff Trail Loop trail. You are taking Chimney Rock back to the early 1900s.
164	Please take note that NC State Parks is way behind on mtn bike trails relative to other states. Trails can be built in a sustainable way that has minimum impact.
165	Please, please, please be careful with this most precious natural resource
166	Please...more mountain biking on well managed, responsibly built trails. Thanks!!





## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

167	preserve the character and unique features of the park, continue access to traditional public use areas, decrease entrance fee
168	Preserving the unique and often rare natural resources of Chimney Rock State Park and Hickory Nut Gorge is a major concern for rock climbers in the park. Another major concern for climbers is our desire to see significantly increased access to climbing resources in the new state park--resources other than the south face of Rumbling Bald Mountain. One resource protection perspective out there says climbers and natural resource protection the Hickory Nut Gorge area are not compatible, and that climbers should be confined to Rumbling Bald's south side. The first part of this view is simply not true, as there are too many numerous precedents from around the country--and world--where climbers have worked in successful partnerships with conservation biologists, on a local, cliff-by-cliff, route-by-route basis to achieve mutually shared goals of recreational access and natural resource protection. Furthermore, allowing climbers access only to Rumbling Bald's south side actually only increases the danger to the natural resources there, concentrating and increasing user-impacts in an already very popular area. A better, common-sense solution would be to spread the use over a wider area, decreasing the impact overall by spreading people out. In the new state park, we have the opportunity to create yet another precedent for well-balanced state park management, preserving the natural integrity and species of Hickory Nut Gorge while increasing the recreational opportunity for one of our state's most responsible user groups. Rock climbers look forward to working toward conservation solutions that support well-managed climbing access throughout the new state park.
169	Properly constructed mountain bike trails will draw from miles around. Supplying semi primitive camping will keep them there for days at a time, bringing money into the local economies...
170	Properly designed bike trails are low impact and compatible with resource protection
171	Properly designed natural surface trails for biking or shared use are a great fit in a park that features resource protection. They have a small footprint that requires little removal of vegetation and can avoid sensitive plant or animal populations, wet areas or archaeological sites. Using current sustainable trail design we can have very low environmental impact and reduce long term maintenance.
172	Protect the orchards; Lose the entry fee; Allow horses
173	put family Rec areas close to MTB trails and or tent/trailer camping like Tsali rec area.
174	Put welcome center on main road across from Town Hall, lower cost, and less damage to nature. Do not allow camping in any area - fire risk is too great.
175	Re-open the cliff trails and the rest of the skyline loop trail. Do not pave the meadows! - the view from the top of the chimney to Lake Lure does not need to include a paved lot and it takes away from special events in the park.
176	Recreation opportunities must be expanded! No cost to allow climbing - no new infrastructure needed. Climbers are good stewards and helped purchase park lands.
177	reopen the fissure caves at Rumbling Bald, at least for guided tours. Bat population is miniscule due to caves' exposure to fluctuating temperatures, so closure as response to white-nose fungus is overreaction; human excluder devices could limit access to specific times. Better to have safe, managed access rather than the current situation
178	Right now I think the climbing access to Rumbling Bald is fair at best. Though climbers are the overwhelming majority of users, I feel we're given 2nd rate privileges to this outstanding resource. The parking area is aesthetically pleasing, but completely impractical for the number of climbers that access the area. It seems that our opinions and thoughts were not of any concern when constructing the parking. I would really like to see much greater work done between the state and the Carolina Climbers Coalition in order to create and maintain a relationship of stewardship while securing access to the 'climbing resources.
179	Rock climbers are deeply concerned about the conservation of the unique and rare natural resources of Chimney Rock State Park and Hickory Nut Gorge. We also would like significantly increased access to the recreational rock climbing resources that exist within the park, in particular at the Chimney Rock attraction, in the Worlds Edge area, on the north and south sides of Rumbling Bald, in the Round Top Mtn. area, and other areas of the park. I strongly encourage planning and managing for this use, which contrary to some perspectives, is absolutely not inherently damaging to natural resources. For example, a common-sense solution to any particular user-group's impact is to spread the use over a wider area by allowing for additional accesses to different locations. Rumbling Bald is merely one single climbing resource in the park, a small fraction of what's available. While certain practices could be implemented to mitigate the impacts at Rumbling Bald significantly, Rumbling Bald nonetheless is a heavy-use, highly impacted area. Impact to Rumbling Bald could be drastically reduced however, simply by allowing for alternative climbing locations within the park. With appropriate management and partnership, localized cliff-by-cliff planning can allow for management, access and restriction that provides a balanced solution--recreational opportunity for climbers and robust protection to the area's significant natural resources. Rock climbers are ready to implement conservation solutions and have the financial and human resources to effectively partner with the state to accomplish this goal.
180	Rock climbing is a historic use and should be expanded where possible.
181	Rock climbing will ruin Chimney Rock!
182	Rock Climbing!
183	Slow growth is good! Be conservative
184	State Parks could also be utilized to encourage increased activity. In addition to environmental/conservation education focus, State Parks could serve as classrooms that teach people how to be physically active in the outdoors - sponsoring events that encourage/introduce people to being active outdoors in a vast variety of ways. Example: Partner with Be Active NC to promote using parks for activity.
185	Strongly consider adding Weed Patch to the park for biking, hiking, camping. Open upper 2 trails "ASAP", connect Hickory Nut Gorge Trails with Park & Lake Lure trails
186	Such polite young men and anxious to help.
187	Thank You for accepting input from the general public!
188	Thank you for all of the hard work and consideration of climbers access.
189	Thank you for all your work in planning for the future of Chimney Rock Park!
190	Thank you for considering mountain bike trails. When built correctly, mountain bike trails have as little environmental impact as hiking trails. Mountain bikers are also characteristically diligent about pitching in with the building and maintaining of trails. The International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) has also been at the forefront of conservationism in trail building, when compared with other outdoor recreational groups.

## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

191	Thank you for creating a wonderful State Park system here in North Carolina.
192	Thank you for designing MTB trails from the plan outset!
193	Thank you for giving us the opportunity for feedback. I am glad to see a masterplan being put together for this project. I work with the top golf course designers in the world trying to fix places that started working on their projects with no plan or input. You are doing a great job and I just wanted to say thank you!
194	Thank you for moving forward with this initiative!
195	Thank you for seeking our input; this park is really a jewel, not just in NC, but in the entire country. Your stewardship both allows people to enjoy the resource while educating people on the importance of conservation.
196	Thank you for the inclusion of mountain biking opportunities in 2 of the alternatives. I ask that you consider opening up any low use trail to mountain bikes. From a sustainability perspective mountain bikes do not have any more impact than hikers and the increase in biking opportunities would make Chimney Rock a much bigger asset to the community.
197	Thank you for the opportunity to see the plans that are being discussed. I think the addition of the road up the mountain would be an eyesore, ruining the look of the mountain, leave it undisturbed. It would also be horribly expensive.
198	Thank you for your devotion to sustainability!! Also, please keep this a dark skies park. Protect our view of the stars!
199	Thank you for your efforts to improve recreation
200	Thank you! For all you've done with the park and will do. Thank you for letting the public be involved.
201	Thanks for asking for my input.
202	Thanks for asking public input - terribly disappointed at trail closures.
203	Thanks for your efforts!
204	Thanks!!
205	Thanks!!!
206	The 300 vehicle parking area in the third proposal is devastating. A trail network that holds more people and even increased visitors but not more paved and cleared parking areas. Such a sad and useless reason to clearcut
207	The alternatives are too difficult to see on my computer
208	The Appalachian Mtn area is unique. It is essential that as much as possible be preserved.
209	The buzz is tremendous regarding the new Chimney Rock State Park. I'm proud to be a North Carolinian because of how our State Parks have been so pro-active in the last few years. So many other states are cutting funding in a major way (CA & OR) but NC has it's priorities in the right place with our State Parks. However, if there's not some progressive thinking with recreation in the master plan, then it will not be on the map for a very large and growing population of outdoor recreationists. Most climbers and mountain bikers are strong environmentalist and understand the need to balance recreation and conservation. Please, please open up some more climbing in that amazing gorge area so people will use both sides of the park. Climbers always rally to help with trail building and usually active volunteers when included. Thank You!
210	The Chimney Rock Property is so far from Major metropolitan areas that even with increased assessibility and trails/camping options it wouldn't be over run.
211	The Cliff Trail needs to be reopened! There is many other places you can walk in the woods. That place is a gem for many people in this gorge, and is the heart of Chimney Rock Park.
212	The Cliff Trail should be reopened, it is a great trail that shows the best of the NC Mtns. and it is a safe trail with proper maintenance.
213	The climbing access "improvement" actually reduced the number of parking spaces. What was that all about? Open up the entire park to climbing and biking
214	The conservation focus should also include Mountain bike trails as it has been proven that mountain biking is equal to or less than the proposed activities.
215	The consideration of ways and means of handling additional traffic in and around the park and the towns is critical. Our valley would be very susceptible to issues of additional exhaust as well as to the volume of vehicular hardware in our limited space.
216	THE CURRENT \$14 FEE IS TOO MUCH TO JUSTIFY COMING UP FROM CHARLOTTE TO RIDE MOUNTAIN BIKES OR HIKE OR CLIMB FOR DAY USE
217	The day-use area for climbing access needs to be expanded to accommodate more parking and it would be ideal to secure access to round top mountain and open up chimney rock proper to climbing to spread the impact. Climbers are a major use group for this park and I hope that the park will work with groups like the Carolina Climbers Coalition to help provide a structured expansion of climbing resources within the park. The CCC has shown it's commitment to the park by acquiring 6 acres, protecting a critical viewshed as well as climbing, that will ideally eventually become part of the park.
218	The designation of a state park indicates the state's interest in providing some recreation in the gorge, a needed and long awaited proposition. HNG however, is one of the state's most remarkable biological areas. Extreme measures must be taken to ensure the future protection of this natural treasure, while providing recreational activities. Expanding the study area both north and west would allow room for reasonable recreation without risking the nationally significant SNHA's in HNG proper. Please protect our treasures!
219	The Intensive Recreation and Use alternative seems to be a bit much: with the parking for 300 cars, day camping and backpack camping. I am afraid that it would increase traffic in a negative way.
220	The maps/links above do not really give any useful information about the three plans. Tough to decipher, so I've left most of this page blank.
221	The old ridge road from Shumont is an erosion disaster. I hope you get in there soon and do something, though I hope you make options for the bikers before you close it.
222	The plan seem to be a good especially with Alternate no. 2. I don't see any plans on water and sewer. Are you planning on tying on to the Muncipal water and sewer at chro.





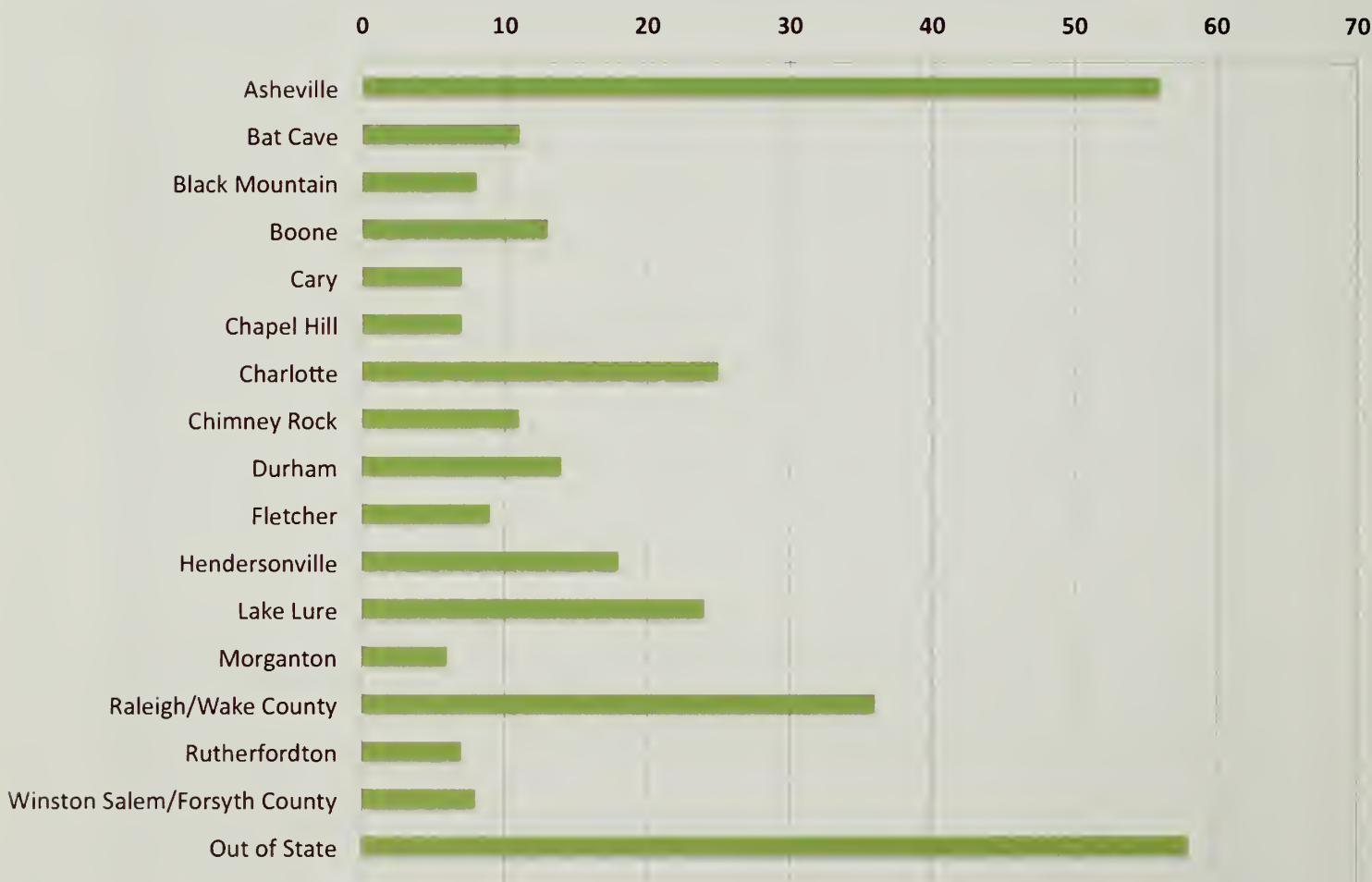
## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

223	The Skyline Cliff Trail is an essential experience and its closure has dramatically affected the park and community.
224	The Skyline Trail needs to be re-opened. This was the best trail at Chimney Rock.
225	<p>The Skyline/Cliff Trail Loop to the top of the waterfall in the Chimney Rock section of the Park needs to be reopened. These trails and the natural nooks and crannies that were made accessible by the Needle's Eye, the Subway, the Grotto and the Pulpit Rock are what make the Park so unique and special and why people return year after year, generation after generation. They embody the best of the mountains in one place - high cliffs, the waterfall, rare plant, bird and animal life, views, geological formations... Scientists and students from around the world have come to study the biodiversity; photographers have come to capture the beauty. There are ways that the Skyline Trail could be reworked and taken back into the Orchard for some of the hike so that the number of boardwalks and railings along the top of the mountain could be reduced, but the Cliff Trail cannot be duplicated. There used to be far fewer manmade structures. Over the years, we added improvements for safety and erosion control. It will take some work and money to refurbish the walkways and lookouts especially since everything has been neglected, but the rich and varied features on those trails are what make this Park so admired and loved. The passion that people shared when the Morse family put the Park up for sale was for this very reason. They knew what the mountain had to offer and they were not willing to give it up. They supported the purchase because they thought State Parks would protect and share it with them forever.</p> <p>Since the inception of CRSP, I had always envisioned a Visitor Center located in the heart of Lake Lure, managed by the combined efforts and resources of the Rutherford County Tourism Development Authority, the Hickory Nut Gorge Chamber of Commerce and NC State Parks. There is no reason to spend money duplicating efforts when all three groups have as part of their mission to share educational and historical information, orient guests to the area and help them appreciate and enjoy all the many things there are to do here. If the plan recommends a Lake Lure site for a Visitor's Center, a partnership is the only way it makes sense. It would be a great place to get your bearings, sign in and get the necessary passes before you start your visit.</p> <p>As mentioned at the input session in Lake Lure last month, this is a 20-year strategic plan and a 100-year vision. With the changing demographics and additional number of residents that are sure to occur with the opening of the new LL school, the new amenities it will bring and the additional lands being added to the State Park, the proposed Visitor Center site in town could potentially cause a traffic nightmare on an already-overcrowded corridor. Low impact busses or trams could be used, but where would people park? People do not like to be far from their automobile. We are a drive-to market and people like to be able to leave or move on their own terms. Traffic congestion and parking have to be addressed as these plans are developed.</p> <p>The development of this Park is so closely aligned to the growth and success of its neighboring small towns and communities, that working together is imperative. Effective communication and strong partnerships are critical to everyone's success. I feel fortunate to live in the area that people love and embrace with such passion.</p>
226	There is an opportunity here to make a "world class" park with climbers as a major user group. The way the plans are now do not accomplish that status. All the climbing areas in the Gorge need to be identified and provided reasonable access and drive in tent camping needs to be established. Climbers mostly come to the Hickory Nut Gorge during the time of year (winter) that most other tourists stay away. Climbers can provide an economic boost to the area during the tourist off season.
227	There is nothing wrong with the park now, except that you cannot go to the top of the falls.
228	There seems to be an over-abundance of underused and eroded hiking trails in many NC State Parks, yet almost zero single track mountain bike trails.
229	This has the potential to be a world-class destination area for rock climbing. Many climbers are college-educated, professional people who would appreciate the amenities of Lake Lure.
230	This is the first time that I have ever seen a NC State Park Master Plan attempt to include mountain bikers as a user group. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU.
231	This park could help the economic development of this area significantly while protecting a beautiful resource.
232	This park needs to be an eco-destination using alternative-green energy and recycle everything.
233	Trails consist of too many steps. What happened to the actual trails? If I wanted to climb stairs I'd hit the stair master. It doesn't feel like the park it once was.
234	Use another area with less potential and tucked away further to be for pure conservation.
235	Use of shuttles or public transportation can allow better access to remote areas of the park without having to building significant parking.
236	very comprehensive study
237	Very disappointed this trip with all the closed area's. Don't get hung up on safety and conservation, don't ignore it, just don't cheapen the experience with that excuse. Its God's country.
238	Very informative presentation. I really enjoyed it.
239	Very polite young men showing us around
240	We drive long distances to visit other areas with nice mountain biking trail. It would be great to include that to attract others to our area.
241	We just returned from a trip to Chimney Rock and there were a lot of places closed to the public that were not closed in the past. I missed them.
242	We need mtn. bike trails in the area.
243	We see any increase in mountain bike opportunities as positive for our business, and for our employees' well-being and the well-being of area residents. A purpose-built mountain biking area at Chimney Rock would add to the regions' already considerable reputation, and we believe would be a positive step forward.
244	When Yosemite National Park was set aside and protected at the beginning of this century, both Chimney Rock and Grandfather Mountain were sold to private parties to develop as they desired. Yosemite is now on the National register of historic places for being the Birthplace of Modern Rock climbing and it is the #1 vacation destination for climbers from all over the entire world. What does North Carolina have besides an elevator and a swinging bridge?
245	While the various alternatives are titled as "Conservation" vs. "Recreation", these concepts are not mutually exclusive. In my experience, the most rabid "recreationalists" are also very conservation minded. We can enjoy the resource without making a gigantic "footprint". See response to #10.
246	Would like to retain a way to access the top of the falls and I don't seem to be able to understand the map sufficiently to see if this option is available in any of the three proposed alternatives. Is the trail going up to the falls going to be reopened as it was under the old ownership. I can understand why some of the trickier trails coming down might be closed or restricted, but the old trail going up to the falls seemed to be reasonably useable.

## QUESTION 11 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

247	Would like to see climbing permitted on the buttresses around the current Chimney Rock Park area, above the parking area and the Chimney Rock itself on the main wall.
248	would like to see more of the mt bike trail system
249	wrist bands could be given to the visitors like red for limited viewing areas and green for trails. I think the honor system would work to keep reds from walking trails with green banded visitors who paid more for an extended access to falls etc..
250	Yes. Please note that properly designed bike trails are low impact and compatible with resource protection. Also, mountain biking trails beyond the proposed 10 mile loop would be most welcomed.
251	you need to decide what is best for resource and the local population of users.

## QUESTION 12: WHERE DO YOU LIVE? (CITY AND/OR COUNTY NAME)





## QUESTION 13: IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CURRENT AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING FOR CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK, PLEASE SUBMIT THEM BELOW.

(E-mail addresses and other private information was removed from the responses below)

1	A point of curiosity -- why was the Bottomless Pools trail included in proposal 1 (the most environmentally conservative proposal) and not in the Low Impact Recreation proposal 2? Thank you.
2	A semi-developed campground would be nice since there are limited campgrounds in the area. Mortimer campground is a good example of what a ground for the area can be with minimal impact to the surrounding (since there are no hook up for the big campers).
3	Thanks for the info and ability to provide input.
4	Are there any plans to allow climbing on the north facing side of the Gorge?
5	Are there any volunteer outfits willing to work on trails? I would be interested in helping. Thanks. (sorry I missed the planning input day)
6	Are you considering reopening the existing trails, this could be done very inexpensively and would please a lot of visitors. Don't hide the best features.
7	I'd like to be involved in assisting with the trails within the system.
8	By all means contact me for further input on this park: I intend to use it as a private user and also as a public school principal of inner city students who need an accessible park such as this to deepen their appreciation for and understanding of the natural features of their home region - the Blue Ridge Escarpment.
9	Does the "west side of Chimney Rock Mountain" mentioned in the description of where the access road might go under Alternative 3 actually mean the WEST side?? Thanks.
10	Is free climbing access being discussed?
11	entrance fees: could they be lower and still provide funding for park development and upkeep? possibly park passes: yearly, mult. years?
12	Find the money to fix the cliff trail.
13	I am curious on what the time table is. How long till the improvements are decided upon, started, and finished? I know this will be a really general answer, but thats okay.
14	I am the Secretary of the Carolina Climbers' Coalition. I live in Raleigh and would be more than happy to work with Greenways in any way I can in order to help with the planning process.
15	I don't see any construction costs associated with any of the plans. Is this going to be provide in future plans. The trail width for the multiuse trail seems to be mighty narrow. I suggest 10 wide for a this type.
16	I love spending winter days in Hickory Nut Gorge. I look forward to increased accessto the cliffs on public land.
17	Thanks again.
18	I would be interested in the decison making progress and its slant towards 1, 2 or 3 by email to michaham@gmail.com with appropriate subject in the email so it won't be considered spam.
19	I would love to know more about the proposed mountain biking trails.
20	I would love to see status updates posted regularly to the State park service website so that we the public might be able to offer our input on important decisions that will likely have long term impact. It sounds like this is the purpose of the project website mentioned in the next item below but I thought I'd mention it anyway!
21	I'd like to receive the details on the management of sensitive resources of the park. Thank you
22	If mountain biking were to be allowed, how many miles could it be potentially?
23	If the State decides on the Intensive Use plan I will never visit CRSP again. I believe that the hiking and primitive camping aspects should be expanded carefully to protect the fragile ecosystems of the park for the future while still allowing access to those who will respect it and gain a better knowledge and love of nature conservation from their visit.
24	Interested in what's going on... would like to know more about Round Top (Ghost Town), Blue Rock, and Chimney Rock areas specifically in terms of rock climbing and mountain biking.
25	Is horseback riding allowed on old roads currently in place since we have been riding these trails since this area was settled 100's of years ago?
26	Is opening up more cliffs for climbing without a guide a consideration?
27	Is the original upper trail to upper falls ever going to be reopened?
28	Is there a way to be put on any committee regarding the park's development?
29	It would be nice to have mtn biking trails built there
30	please keep me updated and please reinstate the trail to the top of the falls
31	I would love to know how the vote comes out.
32	Thank you so much for listening to my comments. Chimney Rock State Park is a terrific place.
33	You mentioned it covers 4 counties. Rutherford, Henderson, Polk? Buncome? or McDowell?
34	Lower Price for instate residence.
35	make sure greenways inc. works hard and honors citizen participation. greenways inc is prone to relying on their reputation to 'phone it in'.
36	Maps are too small to read on my computer. Do you have a PDF file that I can zoom?
37	MTB is only going to grow in numbers. The vast majority are great stewards of the land and it's a population that I know would be motivated to help and maintain the integrity of the park. By not including MTB trails you are cutting out a potentially great asset to the park.

## QUESTION 13 - INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

38	I grew up in Rutherford County.
39	my question is when does it open?
40	Once plans are finalized , do you proceed by large steps or do you open access in smaller step by step process allowing for use to begin soon and then continue to grow each area as needed?
41	98145.452
42	please include me on updates and news releases
43	Please include SORBA and IMBA in the process of developing trails at Chimney Rock State Park
44	Please keep me informed regarding the planning process.
45	Please keep me updated on any progress towards more park access for mountain bike enthusiasts. Thank you for allowing me to offer my input.
46	Please protect climbing in this area. It is a beautiful place and is a valued winter resource for the climbing community. A campground is the most needed facility at the moment.
47	Please work with the Carolina Climbers Coalition as much as possible! Climbers can be a great resource for the park and we want to work with the management team.
48	Thank you so much for your wonderful vision!
49	Thank you!
50	Thanks for taking my comments.
51	Thanks for taking the time to consider public input! Climbers love the rock, the land, and appreciate the opportunity to access the cliffs that inspire us. We'll be happy and willing partners in any planning, discussions, and even ongoing maintenance of trails and cliff lines. Thanks
52	Thanks for the opportunity to respond and for all of the hard work conducted. Hickory Nut Gorge is spectacular!
53	The state of Virginia has some wonderful state parks with mountain biking trails that are wonderfully maintained by the state wide mountain biking group. They learned their trail building from the international group (IMBA) which take into consideration such things as drainage and runoff and environment for all species.
54	To what extent do we think there are state dollars for continued and the growth of conservation in the Gorge? Have there been serious talks about a buffered "Summits Trail" such as the one the Town of Lake Lure proposes?
55	We are a low impact user group. All we really need to practice our sport are trails, water, parking and camping. For good climbing we'll hike. Visual and environmental impact can be mitigated through intelligent trail building, permitting, cliff-top anchors, etc. And we can be counted on to volunteer, building trails, picking up trash, etc
56	Website is very hard to use. Very large - time consuming downloads in .pdf (and I have high speed internet connection). The .pdf map that I wanted to print would not print - possibly too large a file.
57	What is the plan for allowing climbing without having a guide? tomgallo@charter.net
58	What is the timeline for recreational activities to become available?
59	What is the timeline for this project?
60	When will be decision be made? How will we know the details of what was decided (newspaper?)
61	when will hiking trails be open?
62	Who will build the bike trails? Will there be multi-use trails, bike only, running and hiking only? Multi use is the best and cheapest way to go
63	Why are only a small portion of the proposed trails open to bikes? Are the mountain bike trails just for bikes or are they open to hikers and or horses? Why are there no mountain bike trails in the conservation focused plan? Will there be any fees for using the mountain bike trails? Will the mountain bike trails be open for use at all times 24/7?
64	why are paths drawn over private property? will the road through the orchards be accessible to the town of chimney rock?
65	Why are some of the proposed trails for hiking only? Why limit mountain biking to only a small portion of the proposed trails. Are the mountain biking trails off limits to hikers? Thanks!
66	Why did the planning group not consider the most significant area of the Park, the upper Skyline-Cliff Trail Loop, in any of the alternatives?
67	Will Chimney Rock be open to public University Recreation and Education programs to utilize? Will there be a fee for these state funded programs to program at the park?
68	Will climbing be allowed at Chimney rock proper, the area known as Ghost town and all the cliffs located on the north side of Rumbling Blad Mtn?
69	Will the Cliff's Trail ever be reopened? I know portions of that trail were very narrow, but it was one of the more spectacular of the trails at the park. Will the upper trail be reopened to hikers can walk to the top of the falls? Thank You.
70	With the proposed plans, I question why the biking has all the stream crossings due environmental impact? Is it possible to spread the biking out or have any biking in the sugarloaf/edge of the world area?
71	Would love to hear about the possibility of acquiring Weed Patch mountain.
72	You mentioned it covers 4 counties. Rutherford, Henderson, Polk? Buncome? or McDowell?





## PUBLIC COMMENT FORM #2 RESULTS

The second Chimney Rock State Park public comment form was structured as an open-ended. The responses to each question are tallied in the following charts. A total of 217 responses were recorded.

### QUESTION 1 - WHAT ASPECTS OF THE DRAFT PLAN DO YOU LIKE BEST? WHY?

1	I appreciate the fact that it seems to be all inclusive for a wide range of recreational activities. Activities such as rock climbing and day hiking should continue to be available to the public as well as groups who would like to utilize the resources there.
2	That it does allow some climbing and recreational use of the park. Because to have a State park paid for by my tax dollars solely for the purpose of preservation seems extremely counterproductive and a waste of tax dollars as well as an extremely valuable, rare and useful natural resource.
3	I love the idea of having a state park in such close proximity and creating an infrastructure to support visitors.
4	First and foremost I would like to thank you for reading our thoughts on the Draft Master Plan for Chimney Rock State Park. I hope you consider my comments as the climbing around Hickory Nut Gorge is near and dear to my heart. Currently I live in Columbia, South Carolina. As a weekend warrior I travel on most weekends to go climbing. Rumbling Bald is the closest climbing destination I have. Despite the fact that it's within close proximity, it's some of the best rock climbing in the state of North Carolina. The rock quality is absolutely superb. Being of such high quality, the crags offer many attributes; the first and foremost is safety. Bullet hard stone means bolts will last longer, gear will clinch and holds will be less likely to break. This concept alone is noteworthy. Moreover, CRSP promotes tourism in the area. Gems like Rumbling Bald are few and far between and the CRSP has a great amount of potential. Opening up other areas within the CRSP will allow for more tourism and distribute the benefits to the entire region. I sincerely hope you will entertain our ideas below. I regularly climb in the Hickory Nut Gorge of North Carolina and write today to offer comments on the Draft Master Plan for Chimney Rock State Park (CRSP), a destination for climbers in the Southeast and Nationwide, seeking all forms of climbing from traditional and sport climbing to bouldering and ice climbing. (Section 1) The plan as currently drafted fails to recognize the important role of the climbing community and Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) in development and conservation of CRSP. Rock climbing should be mentioned in the Site Context as it has been a viable activity in the area for over 30 years. Since initial legislation in 2005, the CCC and climbers have been a leading proponent for public land conservation in Hickory Nut Gorge, including CCC's most recent purchase of the West Side Boulders for future transfer to CRSP. This plan needs to include the CCC and the Access Fund as important cooperative resources. (Section 10-24) We appreciate and support recommendations for improvements to parking and trail access at Rumbling Bald Mountain. Due to the site's lack of historical land management and growth in popularity, impacts have been concentrated at Rumbling Bald. As a recreational user, I want to see high traffic areas restored through cooperative partnering of climbers and CRSP. The south side of Rumbling Bald represents a unique case where impacts cannot automatically be attributed to climbing; many other climbing areas in the state park system see very minimal impact from climbing. (Section Ex-11) The draft plan does not acknowledge historic climbing areas beyond the limited selection of published guidebooks. Specifically, I strongly advise the master plan to recognize climbing at the south face of Round Top Mountain (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbling Bald. Concentrating climbers on the south side of Rumbling Bald will only increase impacts to a single area of high conservation value. Both Ghost Town and the north side of Rumbling Bald have a 20+ year climbing history. (Section Ex-11) We appreciate the draft master plan's encouragement of a climbing management plan to evaluate future climbing areas. However, the plan should outline greater detail and collaboration to ensure that recreation and natural resource protection are balanced. Additionally, a process should build on the success of the Natural Heritage and Natural Resources programs to include site-specific studies of the type of climbing and any documented impacts in other Hickory Nut Gorge areas containing significant climbing resources. With appropriate management and study, recreation and natural resource protection are not mutually exclusive. Specific examples include World's Edge (Cane Creek), Chimney Rock Attraction, Blue Rock, Cloven Cliffs, Weed Patch Mountain, and Eagle Rock. Whether currently owned by Chimney Rock State Park or a potential future acquisition of private land, the master plan needs to acknowledge that these areas will be evaluated in a timely manner. This process will ensure that such sought-after resources become available to the public and relieve concentrated impacts to the south face of Rumbling Bald. North Carolina State Parks have had a very successful history of working with climbers to provide a balanced management approach to conservation and public recreation. In return, climbers have been supportive of State Park conservation objectives and management throughout the years. I urge you to incorporate our comments and build a framework for long-lasting collaboration with the climbing community.
5	Expanded to include areas not yet owned by state
6	The attempt to provide access and activity to the property
7	For me it lays down the framework to meet the various needs of attraction tourist and the more serious outdoor recreation visitor. The ability to have access to a quality multi-day hiking trail network is outstanding. I also appreciate the willingness of the NC State Parks to incorporate mountain biking and rock climbing. Like does not describe what the North Carolina State parks system has done to protect and allow continued use of what could become one of the premiere outdoor recreation venues in the southeast United States, it is outstanding. Providing numerous educational avenues for local school children and adults- it would be great to see more local school age children/ families have the ability to explore the natural world and I feel that the CRSP plan allows for the continued growth of educational outcomes.
8	Here are some thoughts regarding the "non-pedestrian" areas of the park. I endorse the long hiking trails as well as good and preferably unfettered access to climbing and bouldering and the mountain biking network sounds good, but would hold a lesser priority. I hope you can connect to other hiking areas on adjacent lands and please avoid placing trail signs. When people are seeking interface with wilderness, trail signs are counter to the whole experience. A good map and a compass is more fitting. A gps is fine, too. Please do not build trail improvements, except those that are absolutely necessary for erosion abatement. Climbing is a great educational tool and having some bolts for belay setups would make things go faster and smoother for group leaders to set up, offer some climbing and then to move on to allow others an opportunity to climb. Please allow people to be responsible for their own safety. They may need to sign a waiver so that the state doesn't feel that they must carry the responsibility for everyone's safety.
9	For me it lays down the framework to meet the various needs of attraction tourist and the more serious outdoor recreation visitor. The ability to have access to a quality multi-day hiking trail network is outstanding. I also appreciate the willingness of the NC State Parks to incorporate mountain biking and rock climbing. Like does not describe what the North Carolina State parks system has done to protect and allow continued use of what could become one of the premiere outdoor recreation venues in the southeast United States, it is outstanding. Providing numerous educational avenues for local school children and adults- it would be great to see more local school age children/ families have the ability to explore the natural world and I feel that the CRSP plan allows for the continued growth of educational outcomes.
10	Installation of trails, because these can be used for horseback riding if someone will label them for that use.
11	It is decidedly comprehensive in nature, and represents a variety of user groups.
12	It's comprehensive and covers a range of users from the general visitor to the avid outdoor recreational user.
13	Decent mapping

14	The access shuttle is a good idea to limit auto's in the park.
15	The transformation of a cheesy, touristy private enterprise, into yet another beautiful North Carolina State park, is one of the most reassuring and encouraging developments for any naturalist in the state. I also like the expansion of the boundaries of the park, with other opportunities for preservation decades down the road. If we don't save wilderness now, we'll never get it back in the future.
16	
17	the elimination of any further rock faces open for climbing - the natural resources MUST be protected. The inclusion of Weed Patch for mountain biking, which will allow the fragile ecosystems on Rumbling Bald to be preserved.
18	Hiking trails, camping areas, more access overall. This allows the public (owners) to use their property for their recreation and enjoyment.
19	the new access road because the old road is dangerous
20	Overall I believe it to be a very good plan. I like the plans for the Meadows, with a visitor center and all support staff in one place. As much as I do not like change to such a beautiful park as Chimney Rock, and the surrounding land, I do believe a two-lane road is a good idea. And, thank goodness, you realized traffic should be exiting into Chimney Rock Village!
21	I like the idea for the new trail for hiking and mountain biking. I also appreciate the fact that this land is now publically own by the NC Park Service. I have been traveling to Rumbling Bald/Chimney for over a decade.
22	The entire proposal is very attractive. In particular the recreational activities look well planned with care taken to protect the natural resources of the park. Restoration of the trail system and the rerouting of the cliff trail is important. The proposals for additional trails is very welcome. It is great that day use areas with free access to attractions is included.
23	I thought the plan did a good job of highlighting the natural communities found within the park. The area is rich in unique flora and fauna; any plans for expanding recreational opportunities should keep this into account.
25	That there were several plans and alternates studied.
26	The plan claims to be comprehensive and promote healthy living activities. Unfortunately it does not provide for construction and maintenance of equestrian riding facilities and trails. North Carolina is one of the leading states for horse lovers and needs to be inclusive of the needs and interests of the equestrian community. Once approved, it will be too late to accomodate the growing interests and needs of equestrians and their horses.
27	None. Climbing and activities of recreation should be available to all areas.
29	Keep climbing access open and legal! Climbers have proven to be responsible users of the land. I never see trash or any disrespect to property. I have always had positive interactions with climbers enjoying the area! They also frequent the area in the winter which is the town's off season. They have also purchased land to preserve access. This is such a special place! As a climber I always make it a point to support the local businesses on the way back home.
30	Horse/equestrian trails
31	I was impressed with the comprehensive nature of the plan.
34	Actually, I'm pretty ticked off. Once again, the state ignores the needs of the horse enthusiasts. We spend a lot of money in this state. The need for equestrian facilities/trails was in the original needs assessment. What happened to that idea.
35	I DO LIKE THE IDEA OF PARK DEVELOPMENT WITH A LOW ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT.
36	Repair of existing facilities and repair/expansion of trails
37	Increasing the size of the park, purchasing more land, adding Mt. Biking trails
38	That we have a park at Chimney Rock!
39	I don't like it
40	None, you have left out a large segment of the recreation population of NC by excluding equestrians. Most riders are now having to go outside of the state to enjoy state park trails. The horse industry is one of the largest in the state and provide valuable dollars to the economy.
41	I like that the park is opening up to more people - increase traffic to the area will improve the local business. Increased awareness will encourage increased conservation.
42	Aquire more land.
43	The plan preserves access at Rumbling Bald for rock climbing.
44	I am most looking forward to the mountain biking trails and, secondly, the trails connecting other areas to the main park. We love biking and would like to have another relatively nearby place to do it.
45	I like the thought and time that went into this plan and the opportunity for public input. I also like the consideration for what's special from an environmental standpoint and balancing that with economic factors for the community and utilization of these new public resources.
46	--We support the balance that the draft master plan has struck with respect to these natural heritage considerations and the many other goals of the State Park. --We are pleased to see the inclusion of the Weedpatch Mountain tract in the plan.
47	Detail of each section. Maps could have been larger.
49	The draft plan is ill conceived I don't like it.
50	Expansion and use of the parks natural features.
51	Having more area and things for my vacation rental guest to do in this area to keep day trippers for heads in beds and longer stays for already booked guest.
52	I am glad to see a proposal for an addition of new trails and parking lots. It is good to see a mountain bike trail being built, but I'm much more interested in climbing access.
54	PLEASE include horseback trails. Horses have a long tradition in these mountains, and there are a lot of people who enjoy sharing the trails with their horses.
55	Another state park is great and this is an amazing area.



56	The expansion and increased access are mostly good. Don't get too commercial - it's a great natural, rugged experience for its size.
57	to preserve open space
59	glad we are improving this park. However, due to not getting the info about date and time, I was not at the meeting. I understand, however, that there is not inclusion of horse trails. This is lacking for my enjoyment.
60	multiple user groups spread out throughout the park
61	Increased access during daylight hours and easy access.
62	Conservation is a priority. Development appears to be minimized while still opening areas for access.
64	I like that the plan is trying to conserve the beauty of nature that we have.
66	The concept of the State Park seems to be a positive thing for the public with the exception of not allowing horses - this area is a prime location for the peaceful enjoyment of horseback riding - has been done there for a long time and why would the powers that be contemplate mountain bikes careening all over the paths yet not allow horses - i believe the tires, sudden stops, jumps etc conducted by bike enthusiasts causes much more damage than a horse sauntering down the trail. Come on people.
67	First of all, when NC bought the property for use as a state park FOREVER I thought it was great. I've hiked up there many times and around WNC many times and have always seen horses and they are always a welcome sight. Horses and riding is a strong pastime and it should be honored as a safe and accepted way to enjoy the State Park Trails that we all pay for. Horses are the least intrusive, next to hikers, of users of trails. Bikers have always and always will cause the most damage to trails...not because of their intent, but because of the nature of the "ride"....speed, knobby tires, quick cuts on trails and curves. Horse people have always been polite to me and I to them. Bikers frequently go so fast around curves, down hills, over moguls that they're on me before they can announce their presence and it's hit the shoulder quick or get run over. Bikers are supposed to yield to hikers. Hikers are supposed to yield to horses. No problem. We have 4 horses in our family...please don't take away the right to enjoy that beautiful park by riding our horses through it. I think someone that is impartial to all traffic should be making some input on the use of the trails and who is prevented from using the trails. Thank you.
68	None
69	The plan states that more parking will be provided and loop trails around the lake will be added. This will be a nice addition to make the park more accessible
70	Recognition and protection of the unique site and ecology of the site.
71	What do I like best, I have a hard time with that question. As a trail rider and Back Country Horseman that focuses on maintaining trails in Pisgah Forest, and the Great Smokies National Park, I see no representative from the horse industry on you committee. Polk County is ranked 5th for equestrians in the US and we were not has to be on the planning committee. I am in shock and very upset by your lack of commitment to the equestrians of WNC.
72	See item 2
73	I like the over-all concept of adding more land for public use There are fewer opportunities for folks to have facilities such as these. There is a higher awareness level of the responsibility of the users to help maintain such facilities.
74	I hope you are going to add horse trails for this project.
77	I am not able to open the plan, apparently because of the size of the files. It locks my PC up each time I try to open a file. Therefore I only know what I have read about the plan elsewhere.
74	Opening and improving access to this beautiful part of our state.
79	I'm a mountain biker and am excited to see land set aside for future MTB trails. I regularly volunteer for trail maintenance work and feel strongly that equestrian use is undesirably high-impact, and that bike-horse conflict is a "hot" issue with users. So i'm pleased to see the proposal does not admit equestrian use. I also do some climbing and have friends who climb. I've been to the rumbling bald area and seen how extreme the damage is at the parking area and the access trail. These are wonderful areas for recreation and they must be protected and managed so they can be enjoyed for years to come!
80	I like that the plans offer to a wide range of uses but still will keep parts of the park in a natural state.
81	* The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. * No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. * Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. * The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. * Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. * Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
82	More open access for the public to use the park area with a more diverse interest.
83	It apparently takes a long time to download the "master Plan". As an equestrian trail user and member of the Pisgah Trail Blazers I was not aware that there was a master plan in consideration at this time. I have however been informed that there is no provision for equestrians in the plan. If there are trails for mountain bikers then there should also be trails for equestrians. Are you aware that our association has and continues to maintain over 200 miles of trails in Pisgah, Dupont and Croft parks?? All volunteers....Please be considerate of our contributions and our sport when detailing the master plans.
84	Having a plan that provides access with sustainable trails with access to various areas and sites.
85	I don't like any of it, because you have not included Equestrians.
87	Like all except no equestrian parking or horse trails mentioned. Horse trail riders are always looking for trail riding venues that offer light camping, trail riding, horse trailer/camper parking and places to water their horses and rest them. If you build it they will come. Thanks Michele DeViney Schmolli www.devinefarms.net

88	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide.
91	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
92	The fact that there actually is a master plan.
94	The expansion plan to offer more trails and camping
95	camping
98	All the trails!
99	as a mountain biker and rock climber it was fine, thats how i was made of aware of this. as a horse owner i was very disappointed that access for horses did seem to be considered. nothing in statewide papers no horse org. contacted, zippo. with as much money as horses generate in this state you would think nc would be interested in catching some of it. by the way the download takes ages and the deadline to respond seems way to quick especially in the holidays.
100	A strong desire for increased opportunities within the park. I would like to see horseback riding included.
101	I don't like much about it because you seem to have dis-enfranchised those of us who trail ride our horses. I understand from the NC Horse Council that you did not contact them for input. This group has 2 trails committees, has done several trail construction workshops and actively works on creating and maintaining trails. GIVE US A VOICE!
102	there are no plans for equestrian use
103	What I liked was the hiking/camping possibilities, least was that you left out horseback riding trails.
5	it expands recreation for most user groups. this is an improvement over the "recreation be damned, conservation is the only thing that matters" mentality that prevades the state parks thinking about CRP.
109	The overall plan takes into account the different user types and the various kinds of activities that guests often ask about without compromising the integrity of this special place. It is comprehensive, sensitive, sensible and thorough. We commend you for your efforts in presenting options, taking input, listening to what people had to say and making some changes to accommodate their concerns, for example, the egress into Chimney Rock Village vs. Lake Lure. Working with partners to coordinate and link other proposed trails to the State Park's trails makes good sense both logistically and economically. This collaboration will also help build an even stronger community. Another road access into and out of the Park is critical to safety, emergency management and growth. Camping, however primitive, is good. With the cost of real estate, private groups are less and less likely to provide it.
114	The aspect I like best is the intention of providing DIVERSE public activities for people who enjoy experiencing the outdoors in a more natural state than many municipal type recreation areas are able to provide. I also like the focus on conservation which should keep that natural state in place for years to come.
115	There's very little I like about the draft plan. I suppose it's good that at least some climbing will be allowed.
117	like the fact that there are more options to enjoy the park
118	I do like that talk is being done about better accessibility with and increase in parking. These parking area should be large enough for horse trailers to get in and out.
119	I agree with adding more hiking and rock climbing.
120	I appreciate the acknowledgement that the parking situation at the South Face of Rumbling Bald needs to be addressed. The SF of RB is a highly popular and growing destination for rock climbing, and while this area has been impacted by use, you have a climbing community eager to support a CRSP plan that balances conservation and recreation. Unfortunately, as it it pertains to rock climbing in CRSP, I am deeply disappointed with the provisions outlined in the current draft master plan. I also appreciate the park service and conservations groups that have worked along side members of the climbing community over the years to purchase land and ensure access to area in CRSP.
121	The plan shows a positive step for the state in terms of reassessing what aspects of the park are working, and expanding and improving those, while continuing to work at improving or changing areas that are not working as well.
122	More trails and day use areas. Such as at Bottomless Pools.
123	I like that additional day areas are being constructed and that there are plans for a trail system and backcountry camping. I also like that the new visitor center is planned for the meadow below chimney rock. These plans seem to be fairly low impact.
124	I think the plan is a good start.
125	Mountain biking. Didn't see much of it in there tough.
126	I like the emphasis on linking the different portions of the park with hiking trails. Despite being a small area, the gorge has unique "zones", which will make for wonderful longer trails.
127	Expansion of parking at rumbling bald because rock climbing is a growing outdoor sport that people of all ages enjoy. Rock Climbing teaches people to appreciate the environment, and the Chimney Rock area contains some of the best rock climbing and bouldering in the country (if not the world).
128	I like the increased protection through out the gorge
129	The new road entering from Lake Lure BUT exiting into Chimney Rock Village is imperative for all our small business owners in Chimney Rock who have supported CR Park for so many years, referring visitors to you, and needing the tourist trade that exits and stops into our stores in order to survive our short season. I also think safety on the trails is important but please open the cliff trails. It is the only awesome trail and views that makes the \$14 worth while. Otherwise, besides the "chimney" you do not stand out as a really special place to hike compared to all the competition in Western NC that is free to the public.



130	I like the emphasis on accommodating multiple types of use. I think most people think of a park as a place with picnic tables and some trails. We need publicly managed open spaces for a variety of activities. This sets aside places for those activities. People will travel to NC for this destination, especially for some of the harder-to-find activities such as mountain biking, equestrian (hard to find), and rock climbing (see next comment). This will bring money to the state that might have gone elsewhere without space for these activities.
131	1. The effort to develop a network of recreational trails, both mountain bike and hiking trails. Without trails, people wont be able to experience the surroundings and will have no reason to visit the park, other than drive through and take pictures all in one visit. This is a sustainable approach to keep people in the park and bring them back. It changes focus of the area from a slim seasonal economy filled with harleys, and people that trash the rivers to outdoor enthusiasts who will take much better care of the area. 2. The transit system. Great effort to decrease driving, for use as a shuttle system for one way hikers, and excellent foresight for mass transit which is so badly needed. 3. Tent camping areas. These will allow people overnight options, finally. 4. More trailheads and parking. Its will be needed
132	Increased use of day areas and visitor accomidations and general "user friendliness" These areas seem to be lacking in most North Carolina State Parks, and Chimney Rock could be the first to pioneer a focus on being a place that people enjoy going, not only because of the nature aspect, but also because of how accomidating and enjoyable the experience is.
133	The best aspect is the fact that we will preserve this natural area instead of developing it with homes.
134	I like that the plan incorporates camping facilities including primitive Leave no Trace camping. I admire the ability to work with the community to build mountain bike trails that will be maintained. It sounds like SORBA and the master planning committee have formed a good partnership. I like that Horse-back Riding will not be permitted I don't think it is suitable for the area and can challenge the access of bikes, hikers, and climbers.
135	Planning for parking. There is limited parking now, and this is a source of friction with the community.
136	I like the addition of better parking and toilet access. Primitive camping is also a nice user plus.
137	
138	I'm encouraged that the majority of climbing on the Rumbling Bald feature and the frontside boulders below that feature are remaining open to climbing. This area ranks as one of the best climbing resources anywhere.
139	I appreciate that the plan takes a "step back" approach.
140	The park will be an amazing natural resource to the state, and overall the draft master plan contains impressive vision. The development of new hiking trails in an ecosensitive fashion is a key strength of the plan. However.....
141	at least mountain biking is mentioned but way down the list, especially considering this could be accomplished with nearly 100% volunteer labor
142	sensitivity to environmental concerns; re-use of existing structures; variety of possible activities; inclusion of mountain biking trails
143	There is very little that I have to comment on positively at this time.
144	Mountain bike opportunity. Most MB trails, when done correctly can be multi use rather than dedicated to one.
145	Opening more public access for hiking in the main Chimney Rock area; nearly all hiking possibilities are a fee based entrance right now and there are many great resources on hand. I also like including that the plan/border includes the North side of Rumbling Bald.
146	I like the plans for moutain biking...we live in lake lure and would ride those trails daily...I am a part of a group of local riders who drive an hour once a week to ride other trails...having trails here would be awesome...we know of many folks who would travel from charlotte/asheville to ride those trails regularly as well
148	conservation of nature
150	I like the increased emphasis on recreational opportunities including additional hiking trails, mountain biking and preservation +/- expansion of rock climbing access. I generally use state parks for recreation, especially mountain biking, so I'm very interested in the proposed Weed Patch mountain biking trail.
152	Increased access
153	"Collaborate on a trails network that links Chimney Rock State Park throughout Hickory Nut Gorge" Any attempts to preserve and/or create opportunities for outdoor recreation get a thumbs-up from me. North Carolina is one of the most beautiful hiking destinations on earth. A trails network sounds great. Also the mountain bike trails sound fantastic.
154	I like the part of the plan that allow rock climbers to continue climbing on established routes. I also like the part of the plan that states that as the park grows in size, there will be consideration for allowing climbers to access desired rock faces.
156	I like that there will be some areas still open for rock climbing/bouldering. As a climber, climbing is how I enjoy the outdoors and making climbing availalbe in the park means that I will be able to enjoy to park even more.
157	That there is a plan for improvement
158	I like the conservation aspect to keep the park intact and act as a steward to the trails.
159	I like the trail idea and concept
161	The plan is thorough, and I appreciate that. Restrooms being added to Rumbling Bald parking areas, new and proposed, are a great addition. Great popularity for the Rumbling Bald climbing areas was duely noted, and it represents a problem that needs to be addressed. There are in particular very limited sites appropriate for begininner climbers, and these many people all tend to congregate in congested areas.
162	Natural Resource Protection.
163	I like the fact that the park is proposed at all, and that the land is protected from further home development, beyond that I am not pleased.
164	Shows the natural beauty of the area
165	I like the plans for new hiking and biking trails. I feel that recreational opportunities are the most valuable resource that state parks offer to the residents of NC
166	I think there is a good attempt to protect the ecosystem, however, I take issue with a number of the restrictions for use.
167	I like the remote camping opportunities and hiking trail development.
168	Something will actually be done

169	The addition of primitive camping in the State Park is long overdue and will provide an incredible venue for backpackers/campers. The redevelopment of several recreational areas is also a very important. Providing a variety of outdoor experiences will make the park accommodating to the most visitors.
171	The environmental stewardship aspect of the plan appeals to me the most. As an avid outdoorsman, I understand the balance that must be carefully tended to, and appreciate the efforts mapped out in the plan.
172	mountain biking is planned for
173	I like that the State has a 100/25/5 plan. I appreciate that the State is seeking Public comment. Focus on balancing conservation with access.
174	None.
175	nothing
176	Seems like the park will be more unified and redesigned as a complete entity vs. the haphazard growth of the past. Use more modern methods to make the park more sustainable.
177	Adding more land to the park
178	I like the balance it seeks to strike between conservation of the Park's unique natural treasures and the public's natural desire for access to them.
179	I like the fact you are going to re-open the bottomless pools, add hiking trails and create camping availability.
180	Attention to minimizing overall impact (pervious surfaces, accounting for threatened/endangered species), trail refurbishing
181	The preservation of some of the climbing routes
182	Access to areas on the North side of the Gorge will increased.
183	Those that don't restrict climbing to a very small area with dubious reasoning.
184	I like the following about the draft plan: Visitor Center Location; transit system proposal; access development for World's Edge, Bottomless Pools, and Rumbling Bald; additional hiking trails; and camping sites.
185	The facilities addition to Rumbling Bald portion of hickory nut gorge state park.
186	I would like the language removed that states that climbing as a historical use has a negative impact on the natural resources and should be limited to very small areas. In North Carolina, where climbing ethics are as strong as any place in the country, the average climber is much more sensitive to the impact he/she creates than the average non-climbing park visitor. How can the impact at Rumbling Bald be compared to the impact of constructing new equestrian trails 6'-12' wide and inviting visitors in motor coaches pulling enormous horse trailers?
188	Acquiring more land for the park, because I think that it is natural treasure that should be preserved for future generations to enjoy in it's current state. Preserving the access to current climbing areas at Rumbling Bald, because I am a climber and live in the Fairview community. So, I use this area often.
189	I do like the increased opportunities for recreation but there is still a lack of representation of the wishes of the rock climbing community. The addition of camp sites is a must but not as important is recognizing the vast amount of climbing resources in the park. Please do not alienate the climbing communities wishes.
190	I like the idea of more hiking trails and better parking access on the south Rumbling Bald side of the gorge for Rock Climbing. As a community we raise money to help decrease out impact on the surrounding enviornment. Please don't take away our unique areas.
191	Maintaining current climbing access. This area has a long history of climbing. It is an important area to the entire southern region.
193	Comprehensive and challenging.
199	Over all plan is good....new hiking trails+....new visitor center+.... a real big plus is the tent camping areas+++....opportunity for MTB trails should be expanded...overflow parking area at climbing area is needed asap...shuttle service on peak weekends may mitigate some of parking issues(I'd use it)...
195	Allowing for more access to rock climbing areas.
196	i like the inclusion of mountain biking, because i enjoy mountain biking.
198	I am very excited by the possibility of adding mountain bike trails to the park. It is a beautiful area, and the ability to ride a mountain bike would allow people to see more of the park in less time while minimizing damage and increasing sustainability.
199	I appreciate the continued rock climbing access because it is an activity I hold close to my heart.
200	As long as the park is kept for the public to enjoy I'm fine with the plan I was born here with five miles of the park and enjoyed four wheeling and horse backing for about 40 years both of which have been taking away I'm afraid it will turn into something just for visitors and the locals will not be able to enjoy as we have in the past
201	Emphasis on conservation and environmental protection in balance with recreation. The park lands are unique and should not be overdeveloped. Additional areas are being developed, which is good... takes pressure off the historic park area.
202	There needs to be additional areas of the park open to recreational opportunities.
203	I like that several activities were considered, especially hiking and primitive camping.
204	The recognition that climbing is a key recreational use of this public resource. In other locales such as the New River Gorge region of WV climbing has served to reinvigorate the local economy will providing new and exciting recreational opportunities to local residents and visitors from afar.
205	More mountain bike trails Better car flow up by the rock
206	I like the increased hiking and camping opportunities. This will allow me to access parts of the gorge I have never been to.
207	I like all the new hiking and camping options in the draft plan.
208	The amount of land owned by the state park because I have always feared the hickory nut gorge area becoming swamped with vacation homes which could detract from the amazing environmental setting.
209	As a member of the rock climbing user group, there is no aspect of this plan I actually like.
210	The continued public access to the Rumbling Bald climbing areas and planning for additional parking in this area.
211	Conservation management is a critical necessity that this draft plan actively pursues.



212	The development of mountain bike trails will increase the recreational user base for this area, since none exist currently. The addition of more hiking trails will increase the frequency of frequent visitors in the hiking category by providing more opportunities to explore the area. Primitive camping is paramount when attempting to create an area that will attract large numbers from all over. This will keep the visitors in the area and spending their money on local business and the park.
213	I like the fact that the plan takes into account multiple forms of outdoor recreation and develops new land uses, turning the park into a gateway for all types of outdoor enthusiasts.
215	The inclusion of purpose-built mountain biking trails have the potential to further enhance this region's growing reputation by creating another "destination" for recreational tourism.
216	"Early priorities for future acquisitions will concentrate on filling out the existing park core from World's Edge and Sugarloaf Mountain up to Rumbling Bald...." I like this because we assuring access for future generations and preserving land from private development. "Several new day use areas are proposed that will provide user access to the south, central, and north regions of Chimney Rock State Park." This is good because there is tremendous potential for a park like this. Without opening new areas and maintaining the old, operating a park this size will be costly.

## QUESTION 2 - WHAT ASPECTS OF THE DRAFT PLAN WOULD YOU LIKE TO CHANGE? WHY?

1	Equestrians Use - equestrians are tax payers too & have every right to enjoy our State Parks as much as any other user group. Equestrian trails are no more damanging than trail bikes & those trails could be multipurpose including equines.
2	To allow more recreational use of rest of the property. There are many historically significant routes and boulder problems that, under the current draft, will be illegal to climb. Not to mention the new routes and problems that will never be climbed. This also will increase the impact on the areas where climbing is allowed. What is really needed is additional parking and other legally accessible areas to help reduce the impact and overcrowding in one small area. Climbing brings significant money to the town of Lake Lure especially in the late Fall, Winter and early Spring when they see very few other visitors.
3	I would like to see rock climbing, mountain biking and hiking for camp groups.
4	I am concerned that climbing is limited to areas published. This reflects less than 1/2 of the active climbing areas. I would like to see some more information on the development of a climbing plan. I would like to be sure that summer camps (the largest group interest) be included in the plan. Please contact the North Carolina Youth Camp Association to see that this happens
5	The plan appears focused on only certin activities. Other activities such as motorized recreation has not been described in the draft. Also the quality of life for the affected homeowners, such as increased traffic, both auto and foot traffic. Security concerns for homowners as the plan is affectively developing an attractive nuisance, intrusion on or around private property.
6	Limited access rock climbing - The proposed draft plan limits the future growth of climbing and is very concerning for me. I would push for a plan that allows for the continued growth of climbing areas in CRSP, encouraging park management to maintain a system which examines each proposed route/area on a case by case basis. This would allow the park to manage growth, protect sensitive areas, and encourage use throughout the entire park. As knowledge spreads within the climbing community CRSP will continue to experience large numbers of climbers visiting the area, and I feel under the current plan that the impact (environmental, user conflicts, noise) will be centered. Inadequate Mountain Bike trail system - While the proposed plan does include mountain biking trail development on Weed Patch Mountain, I strongly believe that it misses the potential of the area. The WNC area is already primed to become one of the Mecca's of the sport of mountain biking and CRSP could provide the catalyst to make this happen. After years of riding my mountain bike in DuPont State Forest and Pisgah National Forest I have seen the ability to develop a trail network which accommodates all users. In my experience, I have not witnessed any user group conflicts and I would encourage CRSP to adapt a plan that explores creating a mountain biking trail network which rivals that of DuPont State Forest or Pisgah National Forest. With the creation of a world class mountain bike trail network, the extensive multi-day hiking options, and the world class climbing, CRSP would quickly move to the top of the outdoor recreation world and with it bring the much needed economic impact for the surrounding communities. Development funding - In the plan I did not see a clear answer to how the CRSP would fund its future growth. I would like to see the breakdown of how the dollars will be spent. Will a user need to pay a backcountry fee, are recreation visitors and attraction visitors charged the same amount. Will the public have the ability to purchase an annual pass.
7	I haven't had time to do an indepth reading. Short of the aforementioned points, I think, what I have seen in the Executive Summary looked good.
8	Limited access rock climbing - The proposed draft plan limits the future growth of climbing and is very concerning for me. I would push for a plan that allows for the continued growth of climbing areas in CRSP, encouraging park management to maintain a system which examines each proposed route/area on a case by case basis. This would allow the park to manage growth, protect sensitive areas, and encourage use throughout the entire park. As knowledge spreads within the climbing community CRSP will continue to experience large numbers of climbers visiting the area, and I feel under the current plan that the impact (environmental, user conflicts, noise) will be centered. Inadequate Mountain Bike trail system - While the proposed plan does include mountain biking trail development on Weed Patch Mountain, I strongly believe that it misses the potential of the area. The WNC area is already primed to become one of the Mecca's of the sport of mountain biking and CRSP could provide the catalyst to make this happen. After years of riding my mountain bike in DuPont State Forest and Pisgah National Forest I have seen the ability to develop a trail network which accommodates all users. In my experience, I have not witnessed any user group conflicts and I would encourage CRSP to adapt a plan that explores creating a mountain biking trail network which rivals that of DuPont State Forest or Pisgah National Forest. With the creation of a world class mountain bike trail network, the extensive multi-day hiking options, and the world class climbing, CRSP would quickly move to the top of the outdoor recreation world and with it bring the much needed economic impact for the surrounding communities. Development funding - In the plan I did not see a clear answer to how the CRSP would fund its future growth. I would like to see the breakdown of how the dollars will be spent. Will a user need to pay a backcountry fee, are recreation visitors and attraction visitors charged the same amount? Will the public have the ability to purchase an annual pass? How much will the state be able to provide for the construction of roads and buildings?
9	Need Horse Trails!!
10	MOre mountain bike trails and connection to existing trails. Access to Rumbling Bald and other appropriate rock climbing areas.
11	We like the extensive hiking trail plans, but would like to be able to add climbing routes at Rumbling bald and any other places deemed appropriate. We would like to expand the mountain biking trails to other great areas of the park other than Weed Patch and plan for these trails to connect to regional trails. We would hope to include a plan for connection to the Rocky Broad river and lake for paddling options. With over 70 camps in the area, we know there is a high demand for these specific recreational uses. We understand that these additional features and uses may need to wait for funding, but we wanted to note that there is a need, and are officially requesting that the State Park consider these uses on a case by case basis in the future.

12	The part of the plan that calls for no rock climbing outside the south side of Rumbling Bald. That place will only become more popular. You should allow climbing at various locations within the park to disperse the crowds. It's a great place to rock climb. It was purchased to become a State PARK, not some fishbowl where people are only allowed to look but not touch. I'm not advocating for a lot of vegetation removal and grading; climbing access only requires a parking area and a single-track trail to and along the base of the cliffs. I know there are concerns with species, but the State constructs projects such as roads, bridges, and buildings that have a lot more impact than a parking area and trail. Even if you built a lot of trails, structures, campgrounds, biking trails, parking lots, horse trails, etc., there would still be adequate undeveloped area that is conserved. Let North Carolinians enjoy the recreation opportunities that exist within the park. It will provide for exercise, which we as a society desperately need.
13	I suggest additional climbing access. The impact on tourism by the climbing community is bringing revenue into the area during the winter, and spring. Historically, the park area businesses have closed for lack of revenue during the off season. Economic impact by tourists is important to business owners in the off season. History has shown that few rock climbers are willing to walk very much in order to pursue their sport but that a few climbers enjoy climbing in a wilderness environment. Please allow more input by the climbing community in any decision affecting climbing.
14	I speak as a climber with 20 years experience in NC: I appreciate (more than words can say) the preservation of Rumbling Bald as a climbing area; however, when so much is discussed about growth and expansion in the park, it appears that climbing will NOT be growing at all. Limiting climbing areas to what's already printed in a 25-year-old guidebook is not what we had hoped for. It is quite possible for climbers to co-exist with endangered species ... peregrine falcons at NC wall and Heller's Blazing Star at Grandfather, for instance. I HIGHLY favor a comprehensive climbing plan that limits trail impact, bolting and stress to native species, with penalties for those who ignore the regulations. But I'm worried we won't even get the chance here to prove we can do it.
15	.
16	move the visitor center into town to prevent the volume of traffic on Proctor Road, and to concentrate the visitors in town centers to benefit the economy. I also am concerned about the number of facilities shown on the plan that are currently in private ownership, with no concrete plan for near-term purchase.
17	Reopen the cliff trail in some fashion. This is one of the most unique areas and features of Chimney Rock Park and it has been used by millions of visitors over the last 100 years. Closing it is a tragedy for the visitors familiar with it and for the visitors who would like to become familiar with it. Promote access to the park, don't close off areas.
18	the skyline trail needs to be open because this is an important part of the park experience ; add sport climbing only at areas where rockfall would not endanger others on trails below ; add a zipline canopy tour run as a concession by Beanstalk Journeys ; allow Fox Mountain guides to continue offering climbing and allow them to guide guests on a via ferrata experience ; have Beanstalk design and install the via ferrata.
19	I would keep the CLIFF TRAIL open! I grew up in the area, and hiked the trail everyday in the summer, while working in the Sky Lounge Soda Shop. Even then that was THE favorite trail. There has never been an environmental issue/flora/fauna, etc. with use of that trail. We went ahead and voted for CRP to become a State Park, based on good use of taxpayers \$\$ and to continue to support what the public wanted. I strongly believe you need to do whatever it takes to keep that Trail open: guided walks, cable system (already in use in other locations), etc. The Cliff Trail IS Chimney Rock Park. If you truly want people to come, to enjoy the experience, and to enjoy something really unique, and to keep your word, keep the Cliff Trail open.
20	I believe that limiting climbing to just the traditional area (and boulders below) is insufficient. As a NC resident and tax payer, I would like to see Ghost Town, the North Side and other areas opened to climbing. Climbers are one of the most active and faithful users of this area and I do feel that our concerns are not being honestly addressed.
21	It would be useful to have a table that shows the time frame proposed for specific park development activities, as well as projected costs for various aspects of the plan. There are no proposals for how to fund park development, acquire additional land, and generate funds for sustainable upkeep and maintenance of the park and facilities
22	I thought the plan did a poor job of recognizing the work that the Carolina Climbers' Coalition has contributed, including the recent purchase of the Westside Boulders that will be transferred to the park. The preferred alternative actually restricts climbing to the south side of Rumbling Bald, even though climbing has occurred at areas like Ghost Town and the north side of Rumbling Bald for at least two decades. The plan does not specifically address the impact of climbing at these locations or why climbing will now be banned from these locations. In chapter 3, page 20, Cloven Cliffs, was specifically stated to have "flora not well-developed or diverse" so it is unclear why rock climbing would not be allowed at this site.
23	There should be emphasis placed on prohibiting motorcycles and the attendant noise/disturbance
24	The plan needs to include resources for equestrians and there needs to be a 45 day extension to allow members of the equestrian community time to provide input into the final plan. If facilities and resources are to be included into this comprehensive master plan, then certainly there also needs to be resources and facilities that can accommodate the needs and interests of the equestrian community. Chimney Rock State Park Equestrian trails should be part of a long-term state plan that will enable riders and their magnificent horses to be able to ride from one end of our wonderful state to the other. Such trails can improve the health of our children and their families.
25	The climbing areas should not be limited to the previous areas that have been allowed historically.
26	Climbing is a traditional use of the cliffs at and around Chimney Rock State Park, and I would like to see that use respected and preserved for future generations. By expanding climbing access, climbers will disperse and, thus, lessen their environmental impact. Climbers have shown time and time again to be careful stewards of the land. Just look at the work of the handful of grassroots climbing coalitions in the Southeast, such as the Southeastern Climber's Coalition, the Carolina Climber's Coalition, the Red River Gorge Climber's Coalition, and more. Thank you for your consideration, John Wesely
27	Allow climbing on the chimney rock side without a guide service. Why should they have a monopoly on this? Until access is secured to all areas I would rather donate money to purchase climbing property than pay fees to park.
28	equestrian trails not mentioned in the development plan
29	I am concerned about boxing ourselves in on usage plans, particularly in terms of the growing popularity of rockclimbing and the appeal of Chimney Rock State Park. I would like to see the plan reflect the following: We will consider climbing areas on an area by area basis and we will develop a climbing plan in conjunction with individual users, the North Carolina Youth Camp Association, and other group users.
30	Additional rock climbing throughout the entire park. By concentrating rock climbing to only Rumbling Bald, it will only increase the impact to that area, which is impacted by more than just climbers. By spreading out climbers over a large area the impact will be lessened overall. There is no need to close almost the entire park to climbing. I doubt that all of the cliffs and potential rock climbing areas are home to endangered/rare plants and animals. Each climbing area should be reviewed and valued on a case by case basis. It also appears that public comments and opinion were not taken into account when creating this plan. The results show there is overwhelming public support for climbing and mountain biking however that is not reflected in the plan. Only paying lip service to public comments will not increase long term support for the park. Also, there are much more historic climbing areas than the three guidebooks you reference. The north side of Rumbling Bald and south face of Round Top Mountain are just a couple of areas with significant historical climbing.



31	I would like to see more equine trails
32	Who knows? The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey.
33	I UNDERSTAND THE CONSERVATION ASPECTS BUT I WOULD HAVE TO SAY CLIMBING ACCESS. IT IS A LOW COST/IMPACT ACTIVITY IF MAINTAINED PROPERLY WITH GREAT REVENUE TO BE MADE
34	*****Inclusion of Equestrian facilities. Equine activities contribute substantially to the state and regional economy, and incorporating equestrian facilities would not only serve the horse community, it would also foster additional economic development for the region. The proposed plan repeatedly cites equestrian use in its needs assessment (part 4), and equestrian activities were listed as a goal in the park's purposes (part 6). However, equestrian trails were summarily dismissed in the development plan with very little explanation, or evidence of consultation with any equestrian groups such as the NC horse council. The NC horse council has done its best to alert the equestrian community of the slight against them with the development plan. However, the opportunities for public input have been inadequate and poorly advertised. The comment time should be extended to allow people to more properly review the plan and comment. Additionally, comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. While there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
35	With 36% of school age children over weight or obese we need to promote activity. Great to have Mt. Biking trails, rent some bikes too. Get rid of the bus route, rent bikes and have people ride from spot to spot. I love horse people and have friends that ride, add a horse renting concession. Increasing climbing access. Climbing and even seeing people climb is a great motivator for health. Climbing should be allowed through out the park The plan does not need more building, except bathrooms. It needs to encourage activity and motion.
36	We need horse access. There are diminishing opportunities for trail access for horseback riders and we need to have opportunities to continue to enjoy parks and recreation as well.
37	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
38	Include riding trails for horses. The state has not provided adequate riding trails in comparison to what the horse industry brings to the state revenue.
39	Incorporate more 'active' activities - Climbing, mountain biking, etc. Hiking trails are low impact, high return, but so are other activities. Increased access to land for these activities will encourage more visitation and land stewardship.
40	It is beyond my comprehension how this plan can recommend new buildings, roads, bridges and complain about the negative impact of climbing. Climbing has been done all over this park and should be allowed all over this park. Rock climbing will be done safer and more environmentally friendly if it is part of the master plan. The plan is absurd. You are causing more environmental damage and endangering lives. I have given more money, spent more time doing trail work and more time in the wilderness of WNC than all your consultants combined. Thomas A. Gallo 828-337-1037
41	I would like to see increased access to the world class rock climbing available in the Hickory Nut Gorge. The draft plans seems to offer no increased access to places like "Ghost Town/Silver City," North Side or Rumbling Bald Mnt, Eagle Rock, Shumont Mnt, World's Edge or Cloven Cliffs. These resources represent world class climbing destinations that could significantly impact improved economic development, decreased environmental burden on Rumbling Bald, and increased support through climber volunteerism for infrastructure maintenance and improvement.
42	As I'm sure many others will echo my sentiment, all we want is for the Skyline and Cliff Trails to be restored!! Can the state not even find a way to restore and maintain the lower Cliff Trail?? If the state has the power and financial capabilities to create a new Visitor's Center, acquire new territories, maintain conservation and education programs, build a new ticket center, operations/office buildings, entrance road, day use locations, and countless new trails through the mountains--I still find it very difficult to understand how the state cannot devise a way to make safe and maintain the Skyline and Cliff Trails. They were, hands down, the most magnificent hiking trails to be found anywhere in the Eastern US and who knows how far beyond. They were unique, precious, and I actually mourn the loss of them. It was one of the most special places in the world to me and countless others, and I cannot believe there is not a way to keep them open. I am so angry at being kept out. When I heard the state had won in obtaining the park, I was pleased--until the park closed its most valuable asset. I understand there is a balance between conservation and protection vs. public access. There have to be guidelines and rules for protection on both sides. But at some point, the risk and responsibility must become that of the visitor. It is hard to understand the reasoning behind such vague statements as "these trails cannot be properly managed to support public access and use, due to environmental factors, concerns regarding public health, safety and welfare, and budget constraints." I'd much rather have the experience of those trails to a giant new visitor's center that caters to those visitor's who might make it to the top of Chimney Rock, then return home. You have "protected" the two trails so much that now there is no one there to enjoy them. What is the point in wasting such a treasure??
43	I still believe that opening the Cliff and Skyline Trails is critical as part of the next 5 year plan. Having operated the Park and those trails for many years, I don't agree with the argument that these trails are not "sustainable" - roughly 75% of Park visitors successfully and safely hiked these trails for many, many years. Trail construction and routing helped improve safety over what is available in comparable situations in national and state parks around the country and attention was always given to protect what was environmentally sensitive in those areas. Given what I believe would be relatively low cost to re-open these existing trails and consequently provide a huge benefit to visitors to access these spectacular trails represents the "low hanging fruit" in this plan - it would seem to give the Park the greatest "bang for the buck" and be a very popular solution. The alternative access plan for the top of the falls is significantly deficient in terms of ease of access and scenery compared to the existing trail system.

44	<p>• Rumbling Bald Jeep Road: We agree that the "jeep road" on Rumbling Bald presents sustainability problems, and we support a rerouting of it. The rerouting itself, however, may also be quite challenging. We urge that any such effort only proceed after a growing season botanical inventory has occurred of the new corridor, and that the new path be minimal in size. In addition, it should be noted that a federally endangered plant occurs along the existing road corridor, and evidence suggests that it may thrive with some disturbance. Therefore, if rerouting coincides with these areas, planning for maintaining some disturbance along the existing jeep trail may be warranted.</p> <p>• New Road to the Meadows: We understand that the new road to the Meadows visitor center is being proposed for safety purposes related to having more than one method of ingress and egress. However, among the many factors that should be considered are: (1) the road will pass through a significant natural heritage area, which indicates that a new road is inappropriate unless truly no feasible alternative exists; (2) if a road is built there, it should be minimized as much as possible, including that it not be designed for the use of RVs and vehicles with trailers; and that it be a one-lane road only, with occasional turnouts for the extremely rare event that opposite flow traffic would use the road simultaneously. The proposed bus system could potentially be funded out of reduced road construction costs, and if used effectively, could result in a smaller road being adequate for the task.</p> <p>• Fire Management: We suggest that more discussion of fire management be included in the master plan. Much of Hickory Nut Gorge contains fire-dependent or fire-adapted natural communities. These forests not only tend to need controlled burns in order to be maintained, but they are also by their nature more prone to wildfire than other forest types. And indeed, several wildfires have occurred in Hickory Nut Gorge and at Chimney Rock Park during the past decade. The draft master plan should discuss fire management both from an ecological perspective and from a safety and design perspective (for instance, along with its discussion of fire rings in campgrounds), and should suggest that NC DPR fire personnel plan closely with Park staff.</p> <p>• Phase 3 Trails through Private Property: The draft master plan shows a Phase 3 trail passing through private property between Chimney Rock and Worlds Edge. Please note that TNC and the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund both hold conservation easements on this property, and any trail construction and maintenance would have to be done in compliance with the specific terms of those conservation easements. Even more important is the landowner's consent. We respectfully suggest that State Parks do everything it its power to avoid having its master plan contribute to causing volunteer trails and trespass on private property where private landowners have not consented to the public use of their property.</p>
45	none so far
46	Moving the entrance.
47	Incorporation of more multiuse options. Mountain biking was listed as almost and afterthought. Would like to see more incorporated like at Lake Norman or Umstead.
48	Not closing the Skyland/Cliff trails. This is a vital part of CRSP. Nobody in this world can keep an idiot from safe.
49	I would like to see more access to some of the fantastic climbing area's beyond the south face of Rumbling Bald mountain. Climbing has a long and rich history on almost every cliff in the gorge, and it should be acknowledged that the "environmental impact" has been very minimal, especially when compared to the network of roadways, the gift shop/restaurant, and even the elevator shaft in Chimney Rock proper. There is no reason to believe that climbing cannot coincide with conservation, especially with ecologically built trails. Increasing access would also establish this area as a world class destination and bring a much needed boost to the local (and state) economy. It would also significantly reduce the amount of traffic condensed to one single area (Rumbling Bald), which would of course also help with reducing visitor impact and resolve some of the current parking issues.. The proposed construction of an additional parking lot for Rumbling Bald near the end of Boys Camp Rd would be a great access point to the north side of the mountain. The infrastructure is already in place for accessing the climbing area's at Round Top -- aka Ghost Town. Also, of special note is the condition of the trails on the south face of Rumbling Bald. It is worth mentioning (and should be quite obvious to most people), that they generally are not climber built trails. Most are old logging roads that have been washed out and in disrepair since climbers first started coming there years ago. Most of the erosion on those trails cannot be attributed to climbers, and should be closed down upon re-routing. If it were up to the climbing community and not the exceptionally slow progress of the bureaucratic process, this issue could likely be resolved within a couple of trail work days (and it would be at cost to the state since it would be entirely volunteer).
50	I would like to see equestrian trails and parking added to the master plan. Horseback riders are loosing access to trails at an astonishing rate although horses cause less damage and trail erosion than mountain bikes.
51	PLEASE include horseback trails. We successfully share multiuse trails in MANY state and national parks. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE!!!!
52	There is absolutely no reason why equestrian trials cannot be incorporated into the plan. Mountain bikes do MUCH more harm to trails than horses. Please incorporate some equestrian trails into the park. There are many, many people who ride.
53	The most critical part I would change is the abandonment of the cliff and face trails. This is what makes the Chimney Rock experience different from your average mountain trail experience. It's hard for me, and I think others, to understand how a private group could maintain these trails for decades but that the state can not. Who else has trails like these? Let me know, and I will go there on my future outings. I work in the media, and I would certainly use these trails in my marketing campaign. When you compete with other outdoor experiences, you want to have something the other guys don't have. You have it. Use it.
54	please allow horse trails at the park
55	would like to see equestrian trails included.
56	I addressed this in No1. There are no conversations or evident plans to enclude equine riding trails.
57	The climbing plan is horrendously inadequate and somewhat slanderous. The conservation goal was reached when climbers helped save the entire mountain from rampant vacation home development. Climbers will not trample the entire mountain and we have been climbing the cliffs you want to restrict access to for decades. The degradation you refer to is from ancient logging roads that hunters have 4-wheeled up and down for decades. The mountain has been logged multiple times in the past. Climbers can avoid the sensitive habitats. Closing practically the whole mountain is totally unacceptable and violates the state parks mandate to provide quality recreation.
58	Add trails with equestrian access to the plan. North Carolina has a very large recreational equestrian population and all state owned and supported parks should include access for equestrian use in their master plans. I understand that comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Therefore, equestrian trails should be part of the Master Plan as well.
59	I am not sure why mountain bikes are allowed but not horse traffic. I have been working with Croft Natural Area in Spartanburg on this issue and it appears that terrain suitable for mountain bikes is mostly suitable as well for horses. Both definitely cause trail erosion, but with volunteer groups, this issue can be corrected as necessary. Foot traffic should have separate trails as well (my opinion).
60	More equestrian related trails/parking areas/ camping etc.



61	I would like to see the portions of the plan regarding rock climbing changed significantly. The current plan limits rock climbing to very specific areas and routes and does not allow for growth. The park was created partially due to the lobbying of climbers for its creation yet this plan is now trying to restrict the access that climbers hoped for with the creation of the park. The plan seems to see climbers only as being destructive to the ecosystem. While it is true that climbing does damage the ecosystem, it does so no more than any other user group, and in my opinion climbers tend to be much more environmentally conscious than the majority of user groups. Climbers are a great resource that the park can call upon to help build and maintain trails, clean up litter, and conserve the natural ecosystem offered by the park. The current plan seems to be taking a stance of the park against climbers when climbers could be a great resource to the park. As a climber I would love to see a partnership between climbers and the park that would allow for both conservation, and unrestricted climbing opportunities. I believe these two goals are not mutually exclusive, but can be accomplished through the partnership of the park and climbers. I sincerely hope that the park reconsiders the current plan and makes the requisite changes pertaining the rock climbing within the park.
62	not enough provisions for equestrian trails and parking. the proposed changes were not addressed to state-wide equestrian organizations, therefore this NC population is under-represented.
63	Need to provide horse back riding.
64	To prevent equestrian use of this state park is ridiculous. Especially when trail bikers have been given access. Horses do not damage trails....bikes do. Horses are ridden at a walk....you never see bikers going at a slow pace downhill...fast, fast and faster..tearing up the trail as they fly along....and watch out hikers. Equestrian trails should be included. I know people who have ridden those trails for longer than I've lived in NC - since 1978. Those horse people are environmentally responsible and will help maintain the trails..gladly. Equestrian, trail bikers and hikers, heck, bird watchers for that matter would all help maintain trails. Personally, even on foot or horseback i do what I can to help keep trails clear.
65	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
66	I want to see equestrian trails included. I have ridden the trails in Chimney Rock State Park all of my life. There are hundreds of other horsepeople who have also ridden these trails, please do not stop us from riding this area forever. We are willing to help maintain the trails. I have never, in all my years of riding these trails seen a mtn bike on any of these trails, yet you are considering constructing mtn bike trails. When local horsepeople heard that the state was trying to buy this land and make it into a park we were all excited because we also heard that horseback riding would be allowed. Since the park took over we have been forbidden to enter the park on horseback. Mtn bike and equestrian trails can be constructed together and we can all help in maintaining them.
67	One goal of the plan was "to explore the creation of trails for mountain biking and equestrian use." I cannot find any further mention of equestrian usage. Shared usage of trails in Dupont park seems to work well. What's the deal here?
68	I am a certified trail builder and equistrain (trail rider and trail maintainer) I want trail riders represented and plans for equistrain trails and appropriate packing for trailer packing. How can you leave out an industry (trail riders) that has and can bring in MILLIONS of dollars more into our area. Example, Mountain Bikes should only be on multi-use trails and equistrains should be allowed on any trails a mountain bike can use.
69	CHIMNEY ROCK RIDGE HOA OFFICIAL STATEMENT CONCERNING GREENWAYS' EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF NOVEMBER 2010 CONCERNING THE MOVING OF THE CHIMNEY ROCK STATE PARK ENTRANCE TO LAKE LURE NC Chimney Rock Ridge HOA (CRR) is against the Greenways' proposal to convert Proctor Road to an access road for Chimney Rock Park. We believe there are alternatives that are less costly and disruptive. The proposed plan recommends widening Proctor Rd in order to build an in and out roadway to the meadows for the main entrance to the State Park. Proctor Rd is an essential part of our community and is our only access to our homes and property. It is a narrow, steep and winding road that is useable now because of the low usage of the road. We, the 18 families of CRR, are the primary users of Proctor Road. It is the only route out and into our secluded area. We are a private subdivision; we enjoy our isolation, and need Proctor Road to provide safe access to our property. At the end of Proctor Road, we maintain our HOA's private roads. This plan proposes that access to our homes will be restricted and impeded by the cars, truck and RVs entering and leaving Chimney Rock State Park. The plan as proposed does not discuss any recommendation how to offset the problems we will confront by the increase in traffic, noise, and use of Proctor Road as an entrance to Chimney Rock Park. We the residents of CRR value our privacy and seclusion. As an in holding surrounded by Park and Conservation land, we support efforts to protect and preserve this land. Moving forward, we would like to work in partnership with State, Park and local leaders to minimize the negative affects that the use of Proctor Road will have on our natural surroundings and on CRR owners. Our board of directors is eager to find viable solutions and alternatives to the problems created by Greenway's suggested use of Proctor Road. Sincerely, Chimney Rock Ridge HOA Board
70	I see no mention of Equine use opportunities, such as trails camping sights,parking facilities for horse trailers. These folks are very responsible users of trail facilities. They have deveoped very effective methods of trail preservation techniques and have at their disposal many volunteers to do trail maintenance Why include the equine community? They are very dedicated environmentally aware people . who as fellow NC tax payers deserve a seat at the table of planning and discussion. There is an ongoing emergence of cooperation between all of the use groups.especially in the trail maintenance area. Since it is recognized that one of the key concerns of operating trails is lack of staff and funds., the more inclusive the concept is, the better the level of cooperation between the various groups will be
71	Would like to have horse trails and camping.
72	Include horseback riding trails. Long ones. Good maps. I don't see why we can not all share trails. Most outdoor people enjoy seeing horses. We need places to ride too.
73	
74	I understand that the plan does not address equestrian access. I hope the equestrian community will be brought into the decision-making process.
75	There is no mention of equestrian trails, access or parking. Equestrians are an important segment of our population and outdoor trail user community and need to be included in this and all state parks planning. Please add programming for equestrian trail usage.
76	I'd like to see more trails open to mountain biking, or some shared-use trails with both hiking and biking. However, i also realize that keeping bike and foot traffic separate will reduce user conflict.
77	I would like to be able to ride my horse on the trails as I can not hike or bike any more. It is my only way to enjoy our parks and forest



78	<p>* The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. * No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. * Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. * The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. * Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. * Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.</p>
79	<p>We need parking for horse trailers, more horse trails within the park area. There needs to be more public comment time allowed with better advertising of such, It is apparent that some user groups were not properly notified.</p>
80	<p>Shorten it and Make it available to all who use our park system in a version that is to the point and is in lay language</p>
81	<p>Access for equestrians on some trails that could be for multi-use. Include pull-through parking in parking lots. I believe Moses Cone has some pull-through parking as an example. Recently I rode horses in State Parks in Florida where they had the pull-through parking and at each parking lot, horse washing area with the frost free water hydrants where people provide their own hose, but the wash areas were set up where horse could be cross-tied. (Guana River Preserve in Florida; also trailhead in Nocatee, Florida could be checked for reference to the parking facilities which include equestrian parking) Why include equestrian access? Horseback riding is popular for locals of all ages, including retirees which was not mentioned in the needs section of the plan.</p>
82	<p>I want horseback riders,( who are very responsible trail users) to be considered in trail plans.</p>
83	<p>I would like to see trails provided for equestrians. There are a large number of trail riders in NC. We should have a much right to the trails as any other group.</p>
84	<p>Include equestrian trails in park plan and facilities.</p>
85	<p>Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.</p>
86	<p>you need to have trails for horse back riders with good parking, turn around areas for the rigs and camping areas for horse folks..primitive camping is fine showers and toilets are even better. some type of watering system</p>
87	<p>Horseback riding be allowed</p>
88	<p>See #1</p>
89	<p>There are no provisions for equestrian use. Western North Carolina has a large number of trail rider residents and many more people come to the area because it is "horse friendly". With no input,consideration or provision for equestrian use, the park is missing a very important opportunity.</p>
90	<p>More trails and trailer facilities for horses. Horses have always had access to the curmt trails and should continue to do so</p>
91	<p>Please open the upper cliff trail even if you add exceptions for safety like: 1. only open to certain age groups 2. only can hike with a trail guide 3.open only for an extra fee with a signed liability form 4. must be certified climber or anything the park may suggest to restrict those that may be at risk but we need the best trail, with the best views, renovated for future generations somewhere in the master plan.</p>
92	<p>add horse trails</p>
93	<p>There was no planning for equestrains. There are no trails for them and no parking. The bikers have trails planned for them but the horse crowd has nothing.</p>
94	<p>Add provisions for equestrian use</p>
95	<p>More mountain biking access. Seems like there are a many trails but just a few open to mountain biking.</p>
96	<p>it sounds ok would really like to see parking for horse trailers and horse trails included in the plan. it disturbs me that as a horse owner i heard nothing about this but as a rock climber and mountain biker info was available. sounds a little selective to me.</p>
97	<p>Add horseback riding to the plan. There are a lot of riders within the state and outside of the state that would love to be able to ride within the park.</p>
98	<p>I would like to see a longer comment period. The input period is too little, especially considering that it comes around the holidays when many people have a busier-than-normal schedule.. I would like to see inclusion of the horseback riding community. Many of us from the east, love to come periodically to the mountains to ride. We have been left out. I don't know why but trail riders are the biggest representation in the NC Horse Council. The organization has had a number of trail construction workshops and trail construction workdays and maintains trail committees (yes, plural, based on region of the state). Why weren't we contacted? We even have folks who go around and scoop up the horse poop on the American Tobacco Trail where I live. We work hard for our trail riding pleasure and it hurts to see us neglected.</p>
99	<p>add equestrian use and trails</p>
100	<p>More Equestrian Trails and Facilities. The horse people need to be considered too, we would love to see more trails.</p>
101	<p>More horseback riding trails and facilities..</p>





102	<p>Increase climbing opportunities. Why? Our historic, multi-decade use of this area, the fallacy of climber impacts on endangered species, there is already a parking lot at the base of round Mountain for public access, etc. I have been climbing throughout Hickory Nut Gorge for 30 years. I've been involved with the park planning since day one. I handed TNC a check for thousands of dollars raised by climbers to help purchase one of the first tracts of land. I signed the contract when the CCC negotiated the purchase of another tract up on the ridge. I sat through dozens of meetings with park officials, conservancy "partners" and local political and social leaders. I felt utterly betrayed when I read this so called "plan". I know they will pay us lip service in the new plan, but we need to fight if we want to gain anything. To me, saving the Bald from rampant vacation home development was a huge conservation victory. The park and conservancies and the CCC should be proud of that great achievement. The park has an obligation however to provide recreation as well. We climbers fought for and helped pay for this park. We have been climbing throughout the gorge for decades. How dare they blame the rutted logging roads on the Bald on climbers and basically call us an environmental menace! The endangered species and species of concern they are so bent on overprotecting don't grow on gneiss cliffs where we climb. If they grow at the tops, we use rim anchors to get down without cutting a trail. If they grow nearby, our low impact trails can bypass it. We are a low impact, good stewardship group as a whole and the parks do not care. If they truly cared about conservation, they would funnel more money into land acquisition buy what is left of the gorge from the banks who own it now, put a fence around it and not let anyone in. They would tear down the boardwalks and asphalt roads and freaking elevators shafts the Chimney Rock attraction raped "one of the most bio-diverse ecosystems in the world" with. They would not bulldoze a new loop road through the "pristine" World's Edge tract. They would not build miles of paved trails, add parking lots, visitor centers and multiple campgrounds. They spend millions to further rape and pillage the environment they claim they are saving and then call us climbers resource degraders and put us in a segregated little outdoor ghetto away from the "real" park patrons. What hypocrisy!</p>
103	More equestrian trails and facilities.
104	More trails for horseback riders. thank you
105	<p>The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.</p>
106	<p>The Cliff Trail is the premier area of this park. The people of NC, around the region and across the country wrote letters to legislators and funders in support of the State purchasing the Park for them so that they could continue to have access to this Park and these special trails. This trail is definitely difficult and costly to maintain, but there has got to be a creative way to overcome this obstacle so that we can continue to have this experience. There are a lot of new devices that have been developed over the years that could work out there; a via ferrata, for instance, could be considered. Guests have said they would be willing to pay for the experience and would even be willing to go with a guide. The trail has been in existence for over 100 years, and has directed people to where they can go so they do not cause damage to the environment. Perhaps a Friend's group could be responsible for funding the railway; a concessionaire could manage the access to it for the State. We can find a solution. Please don't completely close the door on us for finding a way.</p>
107	I would like to see more Equestrian Trails, parking and facilities.
108	<p>1) the files are HUGE, I have a pretty decent computer &amp; wasn't able to open the whole thing, most folks won't be able to access. You have effectively discriminated against anyone with less than state of the art computer 2) 2 weeks is WAY too short of an open access time. Please consider at least 30 days 3) As an equestrian, I feel very disregarded in this plan. I have ridden the area in the past... and I have 25 yrs experience as a trail maintenance volunteer, I have taken Mike Ryder's trail building certification course, I can tell you that if mountain bike trails can be ecologically sustained in the area, so can horse trails. I am very discouraged by NC State Parks recent Master Plans, they have been extremely prejudicial against equestrians. I don't know where this is coming from.</p>
109	<p>(Section 1) The plan as currently drafted fails to recognize the important role of the climbing community and Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) in development and conservation of CRSP. Rock climbing should be mentioned in the Site Context as it has been a viable activity in the area for over 30 years. Since initial legislation in 2005, the CCC and climbers have been a leading proponent for public land conservation in Hickory Nut Gorge, including CCC's most recent purchase of the West Side Boulders for future transfer to CRSP. This plan needs to include the CCC and the Access Fund as important cooperative resources. (Section 10-24) We appreciate and support recommendations for improvements to parking and trail access at Rumbling Bald Mountain. Due to the site's lack of historical land management and growth in popularity, impacts have been concentrated at Rumbling Bald. As a recreational user, I want to see high traffic areas restored through cooperative partnering of climbers and CRSP. The south side of Rumbling Bald represents a unique case where impacts cannot automatically be attributed to climbing; many other climbing areas in the state park system see very minimal impact from climbing. (Section Ex-11) The draft plan does not acknowledge historic climbing areas beyond the limited selection of published guidebooks. Specifically, I strongly advise the master plan to recognize climbing at the south face of Round Top Mountain (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbling Bald. Concentrating climbers on the south side of Rumbling Bald will only increase impacts to a single area of high conservation value. Both Ghost Town and the north side of Rumbling Bald have a 20+ year climbing history. (Section Ex-11) We appreciate the draft master plan's encouragement of a climbing management plan to evaluate future climbing areas. However, the plan should outline greater detail and collaboration to ensure that recreation and natural resource protection are balanced. Additionally, a process should build on the success of the Natural Heritage and Natural Resources programs to include site-specific studies of the type of climbing and any documented impacts in other Hickory Nut Gorge areas containing significant climbing resources. With appropriate management and study, recreation and natural resource protection are not mutually exclusive. Specific examples include World's Edge (Cane Creek), Chimney Rock Attraction, Blue Rock, Cloven Cliffs, Weed Patch Mountain, and Eagle Rock. Whether currently owned by Chimney Rock State Park or a potential future acquisition of private land, the master plan needs to acknowledge that these areas will be evaluated in a timely manner. This process will ensure that such sought-after resources become available to the public and relieve concentrated impacts to the south face of Rumbling Bald.</p>
110	<p>I am extremely disappointed that there is no mention of equestrian activities. Trail riding and camping is a big leisure activity in NC, especially in Western NC, and there are knowledgeable equestrian groups locally that could help build and maintain trails for free in exchange for access. I am from neighboring Polk County where horses are a BIG part of our lives and our economy and yet I saw no notification of public comment meetings for the park. We have several equestrian groups here but none were contacted for input, whereas I have since heard that mountain biking groups were. Equestrian campers would also be a good source of revenue for campsite rentals; it's certainly true elsewhere in the Southeast. I sincerely hope that you will consider adding another public comment session so that the park planners have the opportunity to learn how well equestrian facilities have worked elsewhere, and how well equestrian groups have worked with park rangers. Other recreation areas have shared hiking, biking and riding trails - why not in this beautiful and BIG new state park, which could so obviously accommodate it? Surely there is space for the equestrian community as well as the others that you have addressed. Thank you.</p>
111	Open every area of the Park to climbing.

112	would like to see plans to include equestrian trails
113	It has come to my attention that equestrians have been left out of the picture and certainly any planning up to this point. There are many horse back riders who would be interested in this if the Equestrian groups were given an opportunity to participate. The Equestrian group is a very large group and a big voice.
114	Leave the existing trails alone. Re-open the Skyline and Cliff trails. In the 10 years that I visited the park I saw these trails improved with more stairs and great platforms. For you to rip these out is a huge waste of money and people's hard work. You should hire people to police the entrances of the trails and prevent unsuitable hikers from using these advance trails. Why should I be punished because one family couldn't control their young child that shouldn't have been on the trail?? Chimney Rock Park has had a great safety record for numerous years. One death shouldn't close these trails. You mentioned they're too hard to maintain. I disagree. Other national parks should close using your reasoning. You can't keep people totally safe. People have to be responsible. I'd be willing to sign a waiver before hiking these trails to absolve the state from any responsibility.
115	I am a resident of Asheville, NC and have been rock climbing recreationally for over 15 years in WNC. I regularly climb in Hickory Nut Gorge and would like to address the follow issues from the draft master plan: (Section 1) The plan as currently drafted fails to recognize the important role of the climbing community and Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) in development and conservation of CRSP. Rock climbing should be mentioned in the Site Context as it has been a viable activity in the area for over 30 years. Since initial legislation in 2005, the CCC and climbers have been a leading proponent for public land conservation in Hickory Nut Gorge, including CCC's most recent purchase of the West Side Boulders for future transfer to CRSP. This plan needs to include the CCC and the Access Fund as important cooperative resources. (Section 10-24) We appreciate and support recommendations for improvements to parking and trail access at Rumbling Bald Mountain. Due to the site's lack of historical land management and growth in popularity, impacts have been concentrated at Rumbling Bald. As a recreational user, I want to see high traffic areas restored through cooperative partnering of climbers and CRSP. The south side of Rumbling Bald represents a unique case where impacts cannot automatically be attributed to climbing; many other climbing areas in the state park system see very minimal impact from climbing. (Section Ex-11) The draft plan does not acknowledge historic climbing areas beyond the limited selection of published guidebooks. Specifically, I strongly advise the master plan to recognize climbing at the south face of Round Top Mountain (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbling Bald. Concentrating climbers on the south side of Rumbling Bald will only increase impacts to a single area of high conservation value. Both Ghost Town and the north side of Rumbling Bald have a 20+ year climbing history. (Section Ex-11) We appreciate the draft master plan's encouragement of a climbing management plan to evaluate future climbing areas. However, the plan should outline greater detail and collaboration to ensure that recreation and natural resource protection are balanced. Additionally, a process should build on the success of the Natural Heritage and Natural Resources programs to include site-specific studies of the type of climbing and any documented impacts in other Hickory Nut Gorge areas containing significant climbing resources. With appropriate management and study, recreation and natural resource protection are not mutually exclusive. Specific examples include World's Edge (Cane Creek), Chimney Rock Attraction, Blue Rock, Cloven Cliffs, Weed Patch Mountain, and Eagle Rock. Whether currently owned by Chimney Rock State Park or a potential future acquisition of private land, the master plan needs to acknowledge that these areas will be evaluated in a timely manner. This process will ensure that such sought-after resources become available to the public and relieve concentrated impacts to the south face of Rumbling Bald. North Carolina State Parks have had a very successful history of working with climbers to provide a balanced management approach to conservation and public recreation. In return, climbers have been supportive of State Park conservation objectives and management throughout the years. I urge you to incorporate our comments and build a framework for long-lasting collaboration with the climbing community.
116	As an avid rock climber, the plan's
117	We really like the skyline and cliff trails and the outcropping trails the way they have always been. We see no need for the trails not to continue. We believe Chimney Park was being a good steward of the environment, the trails did not seem to hurt the environment. We also enjoy the roadside picnic tables.
118	I would like there to be a climbing management plan that allowed rock climbing in most areas of the park, including south face of Round Top Mountain (Ghost Town), the north side of Rumbling Bald, chimney rock attraction, and any potential future State Park land acquisitions. There has been some impact to the south face of rumbling bald mountain, but only because this area has not been managed in the past, and climbers are not the only user group in this area. Also, the plan fails to distinguish between impacts associated with different types of climbing (ie. bouldering vs. rope climbing). Climbers have proven time and time again that they are one of the most responsible user groups. In other areas of the state climbers have built trails, cleaned up trash and constructed educational kiosks.
119	Chapter 10, page 24. I think the climbing access stated in the plan is inadequate. The area has a large amount of potential climbing areas. By limiting climbing to the existing areas you would only increase the impact on these areas. Climbing should be made accessible throughout the park. That would spread out the impact. Also the proposed changes at the original Chimney Rock Attraction area would seem to have more environmental negative impact than all the climbing done in the whole park system. I have been climbing for over 15 years. Most of my climbing has been done in NC. I would tell you that the vast majority of climbers are stewards of the environment they climb in and take good care of the areas. Climbers are also a valuable resource when it comes to volunteer trail maintenance, etc. By the way, I'm a resident of Asheville, NC. I make over \$100k per year and pay NC taxes on this income. I climb every week.
120	Mountain Biking=more.
121	I was extremely disappointed to see climbing limited to the southern side of Rumbling Bald. I feel this is a mistake for several reasons. First, opening up more areas to climbing will alleviate some of the problems of over use at the south side of Rumbling. Second, what appears to be the reasoning for not opening other areas seems to place a disproportionate amount of blame on climbers for their environmental impact (versus mountain biking, hiking, or building a new road or boardwalk). Lastly, I feel the plan fails to acknowledge the positive influences of the climbing community in conservation efforts.
122	I am extremely disappointed that the draft master plan portrayed climbers as a harm to the environment and prohibited climbing on all cliffs except for the south face of rumbling bald. Looking at the big picture of the ecosystem below the south face of rumbling bald, climbers have done very little harm to it and it will continue to be that way in the future. The biggest environmental concern in that area is the heavily eroded old Jeep trails which were not due to climbers. Though some spider trails have been created in the boulder fields, the overall impact of climbers is far less than other visitors to the park. It is very shortsighted to close the many other cliffs in the park to climbers as the Chimney Rock area has some of the best rock climbing in the country due to the abundance of steep solid gneiss featured with excellent holds and cracks. It is my recommendation that as many cliffs as possible in the park be opened up to the climbing public. I looked at the map of the property owned by the state park and the State park owns a significant portion of the cliffs on round top mountain (known to the climbing community as "ghost town"). It also appears that a significant portion of the cliffs on the north face of rumbling bald (known to the climbing community as "the dark side") are owned by the state park. These areas together have nearly 200 extremely high quality established routes and opening them up with careful routing of approach trails will not have any negative impact on the ecosystems in the area. Indeed it will make the environment even more pristine in the whole park as climber traffic at the south face of rumbling bald will be considerably reduced. The goal of Conservation is entirely compatible with allowing climbing because the rock surfaces on which climbers practice their art are very durable and erosion resistant. The main impact of climbers is the approach trails, which can easily be made in a sustainable manner that will prevent erosion. Climbers also have a slight environmental impact at the staging areas on the ground below their climbs, but these areas are usually already impacted due to falling ice and rock in the past.



123	More low impact camping sites please. It keeps visitors here longer and when the motels and cabins fill up, they need more options like camping in class B RV's and tents. Tallulah Falls Park in GA is a good example of camping sites done well. They protect the environment while also letting families enjoy the trail system throughout their gorge.
124	I believe you are missing an extremely valuable opportunity by continuing to close off selected areas for rock climbing. By concentrating all rock climbing into a small geographical area, directly adjacent to private property, this will have a negative impact on the park. Your plan states there is already negative environmental impact and I believe this is directly related to compressing the high demand into too-small of a geography. I strongly recommend looking at similarly sized areas with ample room for climbing and see how they are managed. By spreading climbing areas OUT, rather than compressing them, the desired effect is much more likely to be less environmental impact.
125	1. Find more ways to link together different areas. If someone in asheville wants to ride their mtn bike at weed patch, do you have to go all the way around the lake? Change from making it an alright bike area to incredible by linking trails together for bikers all the way around the perimeter and throughout. Bikers can and will voluteer for these trails.. 2. Allow more climber access. Why keep the yosemite of the east closed to climbing? Fox has a monopoly and its unfair to allow them access. Climbers attract tourism. It doesnt have to include chimney rock itself, climbers follow closures. The climbing community can bring income to the park, and would develop trails voluntarily. Blue Rock and the east side of chimney rock should be opened to climbing at least. Bouldering around the valley should be allowed as well. It could be world class climbing which could fund future park endeavors.
126	I would like to change the rock climbing access areas. As a climber of 5 years, climbing in North Carolina is an important part of my life, and the lives of many North Carolinians. I know of a few individuals who have actually moved to North Carolina specifically for the climbing. Limiting the climbing on Rumbling Bald Mtn to only a few "select" routes is hurting the overall climbing and recreational community that is drawn to the park. Also, I believe that climbing should be opened on Chimney Rock, as long as there are provisions in place to maintain the ecosystem that is already there. Conservation is as important to climbers as it is to non-climbers, as both parties enjoy the outdoors. So climbers are willing to do their part to protect the environment. Also, allowing climbing on Chimney Rock as well as not limiting access on Rumbling Bald has the potential to bring a whole new group of people to the area. Climbers and other recreationists would flock to the area mostly for the common activities that the majority of us would be able to enjoy in or around the park. Most climbers are also mountain bikers, fishermen, kayakers, and hikers, so allowing all of those things, except for climbing is harmful to the recreation business that has great potential in the area. Another reason for allowing climbing on Chimney Rock can be seen at Stone Mountain State Park just outside of Elkin, NC. Many people enjoy hiking there, but the more people that I talk to about the park, the more I hear that the most exciting part of the day was getting to watch the climbers on the mountain. I believe that allowing climbing on Chimney Rock would not only make the climbers happy, but also give something else to excite the hikers, especially the younger crowd.
127	Rock climbing, new routes, and low impact anchors should be allowed in the park. We have been climbing in the area for 20+ years, and it should stay free and open to climbing as it has been
128	The rock climbing proposal. I am a North Carolina rock climber and CCC member. I teach children to climb at a summer camp outside of Hendersonville, NC. I know the potential of the area is great. Not only for recreational climbing, but nearby summer camps would benefit greatly. Right now we are restricted to only a few areas in Western NC. These parks are getting crowded in the summer. If more areas were open than the impact would spread out over several areas. There is a lot more potential for climbing in the park than just the current climbing access area. Rumbling Bald is a very popular destination. It is very close to areas like Hendersonville. It would be a shame if only the current areas stay open. Chimney Rock has some great rock and would help alleviate the impact at Rumbling Bald. The park made the decision to follow a more recreational/low impact them. So I do not understand why rock climbing was so limited. I hope the master plan committee would establish the kind of partnership it seems to have with SORBA with the Carolina Climbers Coalition and work together to provide more access. The CCC does a great job at getting the community to be good stewards and help out on Trail Days, etc. The climbing community was very excited when we found out that Chimney Rock was becoming a state park, we thought we would be able to be heard and get greater access. The master plan should have a DETAILED plan to allow climbing in Chimney Rock and more access at Rumbling Bald.
129	The plan for climbing access needs to change. While all recreational user groups have an impact upon the environment, the rock climbing community is the most conservation minded. Hikers, campers, and climbers need to use trail systems and have significant impact when these trails are not managed. However, after visiting Crowder's Mountain, the Pisgah State Forest, Blue Ridge Parkway, and other state and national protected areas, it is clear that litter, vandalism, and other high impact effects are the work of CASUAL HIKERS / TOURISTS. It is not climbers that leave trash on trails, throw bottles off of cliffs, or spray paint trees and rocks. Only tourists do this. In fact, of all the user groups, climbers give back the most in terms of volunteer labor fixing trails and cleaning high use areas. Why limit climbers and promote access for more damaging groups?
130	The climbing plan is not good. To shrink the climbing areas would only make them more heavily used. To retroactively use the guide books you have used in this plans would eliminate climbs over 20 years old. I think it is only prudent to grandfather in all climbing areas that were existing to climbers prior to the creation of this plan. We CCC members and climbers have been one of the best partners in helping acquire this wonderful resource and we should be given the highest priority in in usage of the climbing resource. We have used this land for climbing for decades and have been the best stewards of the land of all users. Please remeber who your friends are and rethink this unjust restrictive new policy.
131	Make it low impact, non-regulated and legal for rock climbing.
132	The scope of recreational climbing access in the DRAFT is very narrow. The climbing on the Rumbling Bald feature is only a very small portion of the established climbing resources in Chimney Rock State Park. There are many other areas like the North Side, Eagle Rock, Ghost Town, Chimney Rock, Shumont Mountain, and the World's Edge. Some of these areas have been established climbing resources for years and represent the bulk of Chimney Rock State Park's climbing. It's a shame that these important climbing resources have been left out of this DRAFT. The relative impact of use, cost and maintenance involved with these areas is negligible when compared to the new roads, parking areas and visitors center proposed in the DRAFT. Allowing recreational climbing access and use of these unpublished areas is the best way to engage and involve your most active, organised and motivated user group; CLIMBERS. Chimney Rock State park can count on the support of the Southeastern Climbers Coalition (SEC) and the Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) to support the access to and maintenance of these important resources.
133	Would like to see more allowance for rock climbing development in the future.
134	The lack willingness to support thoughtful, eco-sensitive development of the amazing potential rock climbing potential is an IMMENSE disappointment and, more importantly, reflects what appears to be rather typical 'reactionary' views by non-climbers. I regard myself as both an avid hiker and a recreational climber. I have spent considerable time over many years thinking and observing differences between climbing and hiking stewardship. In general, I have observed that respect for the land as a treasured resource is integral to (most) climbers mindsets, and often lacking in hikers mindsets. I realize this is a gross generalization, with many hiker/non-climbers who are very conscious of their impact to the land, but the common sentiment that climbers are disrespectful to their land usage impact is rarely founded. Secondly, I would argue that promoting and permitting climbing development would be result in a significant amount of economic growth for Lake Lure and the surrounding areas, particularly during the winter months, when the park is likely to have the lowest usage by other parties. Much like rock climbing at the New River Gorge has brought a thriving economy to Fayetteville, WV (in sharp contrast to much of the rest of that state), developing the park's potential for rock climbing would likely make it more of a climbing "destination" and attract users from across the Southeast.



135	Mountain bike trails to be a priority
136	Addition of more mountain biking trails. The park sits in a prime location that positions is much nearer to major urban centers like Charlotte, Winston Salem/Greensboro, and even the Triangle, than Pisgah / Tsalali / Bent Creek, etc. There is clearly a great deal of suitable terrain and one could certainly look to somewhere like Dupont as a model in which a much greater percentage of the park is open to mountain biking. Why limit it to a small system of trails when it could be a prime destination--indeed a strength of the park--which would also bring those who would also be interested in hiking, camping, etc.
137	I would like to comment about the restriction of climbing to areas already open to climbing in Hickory Nut Gorge. The restriction of climbing because of conservation issues is utter fallacy. In essence, what you are doing is shutting down the use of certain areas of the park to minimize the impact of a group that comparatively puts much less impact on areas than other groups. Climbers in the Carolinas certainly have a proven history of being stewards of the areas we use. The Carolina Climbers Coalition helps to organize trails days at nearly every climbing area across the state yearly. I truly hope that you will reconsider the climbing restrictions.
138	More mountain bike opportunities. Most MB trails can be multi use.
139	I believe rock climbing access is important for many reasons; -It brings more people to the area (economics) -The CCC works to purchase lands so they are not developed (climbers preserving the natural area) -The area has potential to become a major climbing destination in the East IF access was open to more cliffs including the North Side of Rumbling Bald, "ghosttown" areas and the cliffs on the south side of route 9 around Chimney Rock proper. Spreading out the open climbing areas will also minimize impact and crowds to the south side of Rumbling Bald -The entire area has a 30+ year climbing history with areas that have been published, just not in the most recent guidebook. -Climbers only need a place to put a car and faint trail, not a costly hikers trail unless that was in the plans
140	more climbing access, particularly on the south side of the gorge...
141	I would like to see more mountain biking trails.
142	I would really like to the climbing routes that have been established at Rumbling Bald/Chimney Rock to not be taken away. Rock Climbers are as a general group very interested in conserving natural resources and leave not trace. They are also very interested in helping build trails that are erosion resistant and clear so as to minimize impact to the surrounding vegetation. I have never seen litter at a crag, that you often see at a picnic spot/fishing spot/waterfall spot for the general public. I am not sure why the plan is to take away established climbing areas thus concentrating climbers to narrow areas and increasing use of these restricted areas. I too am not thrilled about how many more climbers there are but there are hundreds more hikers than climbers and the hikers are not discriminated against like climbers seem to be. I like wilderness areas too, wanting to be alone with the rock, but unfortunately America has a lot of people and a lot of people searching for adventure and sport. There are not many climbing areas, and to restrict the areas that there are, rather than working in cooperation with climbers to establish good usage plans is discriminatory. Climbers come in winter to Rumbling because of the sunshine increasing local revenue to hotels and shops and restaurants during the off season. I think you should be concerned rather with putting elevators in rock that with climbers climbing the rock.
143	I have deep concerns about the proposed limitation of climbing areas to Rumbling Bald. The section from the master plan that follows is a limited view of rock climbing in the areas of the park: "Chimney Rock State Park is closed to climbing with the exception of all existing routes on the south face of Rumbling Bald as they are identified in the Climbers Guide to North Carolina, Third Edition, by Thomas Kelley; and Selected Climbs in North Carolina, First Edition, by Yon Lambert and Harrison Shull. Boulder- ing is also allowed in the boulderfields below the south face of Rumbling Bald. Routes are identified in the Rumbling Bald Boulder Guide, First Edition, by Chris Dorrity." This is a limiting prescription that ignores many routes in the Rumbling Bald area that exist but are not described in any of the guidebooks listed. It also avoids the issue of having more areas available dispersing user impact and lessening overuse of a limited small area on Rumbling Bald. There are abundant rock faces as resources in the entire Chimney Rock Park to allow reasonable dispersed use. As for limiting use in sensitive areas for ecosystem/wildlife preservation, NC climbers have a strong history of complete compliance with area closures around peregrine nesting or other environmental restrictions, and those can be provided by the park on as needed basis. Artificial limitation of rock climbing use is contrary to one of the main points of the user group input solicited for this plan: the EXPANSION of opportunities for sports like rock climbing.
144	I would re-open the trails to the waterfall. I visited the park for the 1st time a few months ago and was very disappointed with the commercialism and lack of trails. It definitely wasn't worth \$14 and I wouldn't recommend the park to anyone in it's current state.
145	PLEASE do not limit rock climbing access. We only have so many resources to utilize and if you take any away it would be senseless. Climbers clean up after others and use the rock for more than a backdrop on a desk photo. Please PLEASE reconsider limiting climbing at all in any of these areas..
146	Restrictions on rock climbing. I'm not sure why rock climbing is singled out as more detrimental than any other activity. The park is spectacular and should be able to be enjoyed by all. The only impact of climbing is a few climbing trails, if properly planned I don't see what the big problem is?
147	I'm vehemently opposed to any closure of historic climbing areas. Over the years there has been much more climbing activity in the area than what is outlined in the guidebooks mentioned in the development plan. Much of this climbing has been documented, but not published. Just because these areas aren't in a guidebook does not make them insignificant; on the contrary; sometimes those areas are THE BEST. Regarding impact on natural areas, climbers have demonstrated time and again that when made aware of an issue, the community will take enormous steps to remedy it. One fantastic and comparable example is the restoration of areas along the bottom of the cliff at Sunset Rock, on Lookout Mountain near Chattanooga, TN. In 1993, the National Park Service came very close to closing this area to climbing, due to heavy erosion, soil compaction, and impact on fauna near the cliff. A group of climbers banded together to work with the park service and address their concerns. Climbers put in thousands of work hours removing invasive species, planting natives, and building attractive borders to confine human traffic. The before and after pictures are staggering. Climbers continue to stage at least one trail day per year, sometimes two, at Sunset Rock. Similar trail days are held at numerous crags in the southeast, all year long. Please reconsider climbing closures. When made aware of the issues, climbers will be good stewards of the land.
148	I would like to increase the amount of area to which climbers are provided access. By allowing climbing on North facing walls, the park would both be providing a summer climbing location and following its mission of "Providing recreational opportunities compatible with the character of Chimney Rock State Park and its natural resources."
149	I would like to change the parts about Rock Climbing, Chapter 10, Page 24. I feel that there are lots of other areas besides just the areas that are highlighted in the guide books that would be a great asset to Rock Climbers. If the only place around to climb is the south face Rumbling Bald, then won't that place require more ongoing work to the trails, instead of being able to spread out to other areas of Rumbling Bald and other parts of Chimney Rock, ie Ghost Town. I feel that those areas that we aren't allowed to climb in may become a problem, because others including myself will find ways to climb there, legal or illegal.
150	I have to suggest that more area is available for climbing. With the plan as it is now, a huge amount of climbing will be taken away. I can't stress enough how valuable these areas are to climbers. There is so much climbing history here. Also, I must say that I think it's unfair to limit climbing to particular routes collected in a guidebook written 20 years ago. Rock climbing are constantly pushing the boundaries of what is possible and are continuously climbing increasing difficult routes. If climbing is limited to select routes established 20 years ago, ground-breaking climbing at Rumbling Bald will completely stop. No more stories in climbing magazines about routes in this park. And much less climbing tourism to the park as well.



151	I would like to see an increased focus on Mountain Biking. As an avid mountain biker living in Charlotte I often travel past the Lake Lure area on my way to more desirable destinations. The topography of Chimney Rock State park is ideal for a number of mountain biking aspects yet it seems to have played a very small part in the planning and land allocation. I can share with you that on at least 2 out of 4 weekends a month, myself and typically 2 other friends will travel to Asheville for a day of mountain biking. Along with stopping along the way for gas and any needed supplies we will usually stop for lunch after our ride and spend 10-20 dollars per person for lunch. We are all professionals with average incomes well above the national average.
152	Page 24, The rock climbing plan is ill-conceived. Rock climbing is a main attraction of Chimney Rock and often climbers are good stewards, maintaining trails and cleaning up after themselves. Every year the CCC does a trail day at Rumbling Bald, and the CCC has protected the area by buying parts of the land from private developers with climber-donated money. To not allow the climbers to then expand to areas, which are already climbed right now, is just wrong.
153	Make Mountain biking more than a passing thought. There are many folks that would make the park a destination with more than just hiking trails with a couple multiuse trails. The Charlotte area has over 100 miles of volunteer built and maintained trails. Don't miss a great opportunity for the park to encourage tourism!
154	Add more mountain bike trails. The plan calls for a whoafully small amount of mountain bike trails in proportion to proposed hiking trails. Mountain bike trails can be multi use when that use warrants a multi use designation. Most mountain bike trails are built by volunteers through hand building or fund/grant raising to hire a contractor who specializes in building mountain bike trails.
155	How we are addressing these problems I don't believe to be appropriate. Climbers need access to more climbing in order to disperse their impact better. Also, education of low-impact methods is not provided. People would listen and read ways to create less of an impact if they were presented. Also, I specifically would like greater explanation of what is meant by the following except from the report: "Lands owned by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation presently used for rock climbing are already being negatively impacted by this historic use." How are these negative impacts taking place? As a climber who frequents the Rumbling Bald area, I don't see many negative impacts that the general public would be concerned with. Climbers pick up their litter, don't leave the area a mess, and stay on designated trails. However they can be loud, and I often find some people bring their stereos into the woods. Respect for other visitors can be lacking by some select individuals. Most of the negative impacts I see are those that only affect other climbers. And these all surround congestion. Too many people all in the same spot trying to climb the same things causes problems. This could be resolved by opening more areas to climbing.
156	Expansion of rock climbing areas.
157	I would like to see the entire park opened for climbing access. It was a major topic in the public comment period, and represents one of the most significant and conservation-minded user groups, and the current plan does little to address this large user group. Concentrating all of the climbing access to the one area listed ignores 30 years of climbing development in the area and will increase impact to one area. Spreading the impact out will significantly reduce the impact climbers have. It should be considered that the Kelly guidebook is very old and out of date, and the SELECTED climbs is not an exhaustive list of routes that are even currently climbed and established, only the most classic routes that were SELECTED for the book. Limiting climbing to these routes will be deleterious to the environment due to concentrating the impact in too small of an area. It is difficult to not feel "cheated" as a climber after raising money, and working so hard to spearhead the effort for the creation of the park in the first place to have our access actually cut. Climbing is not a scary and outrageous sport, and climbing can be easily managed with minimal impact. Consider Yosemite National Park- or even locally in Linville Gorge, where climbers have a minimal impact. I also do not like the extraordinary amount of money spent on concessions and visitor centers, in my opinion parks should be for the land and beauty, recreation and conservation, not commercialism and construction.
158	Not much mention of equestrian trails. Historically, rides have accessed areas like World's Edge, etc. If you give no access for that whole user group, you are discriminating against that group. There is mention of trails at Weed Patch, but mostly for bikes.
159	Rumbling Bald holds the potential to be a truly significant regional rock climbing destination. As a long time climber in the state I understand that not all the exposed rock faces in the park will be available for rock climbing, the existing draft plan unnecessarily limits access to climbing on the north side of Rumbling Bald Mountain and Round Top Mountain. To the extent that not all existing routes on the south face of Rumbling Bald are published in either of the guidebooks referenced in the draft plan, it also severely limits climbing on this historically accessible formation. Climbers have been a valuable resource of volunteer man-hours elsewhere in the state park system and have proven themselves to be willing stewards of the natural resources held in trust by the state park system. This draft plan is unacceptable to climbers in it's current form.
160	The allowances for rock climbing (Section 10) are much too restrictive, and do not seem justified. The natural impact of the ecosystem of rock climbing in its various forms is very, very minor when compared to day use by bikers, hikers, and others. I STRONGLY feel that climbing access should be allowed in areas that have been developed, but are not included in the listed guidebooks. Some of these areas that are to be closed have 30 years of climbing history, even though they did not make the cut into the guidebook (which, by the way, is 20 years old). I think this portion of the draft plan should be heavily revised with more input from those with concern and knowledge of rock climbing access. Rock climbers are on the whole very avid users of state parks, will happily donate money and time to state parks, and care deeply about the environment and the local ecosystem. They deserve more in this plan.
161	I would like to see public access to the Shumont area from Hwy 9. I would also like to see mountain bike opportunities as proposed in the original draft. Access from Hwy 9 is attractive to me as I live in Black Mountain and this would make access to this part of the park easier to those of us who live in the Hwy 9 area. As i recall there was a day use area planned for Shumont mountain. That would lend itself to more access by people living in Eastern Buncombe County and coming down Hwy 9.
162	need more emphasis on mountain biking
163	It seems clear from the draft that Rock Climbing will be negatively impacted by this plan. I would like to see the potential climbing areas opened as acquired. Climbers represent a large portion of the users in this area and it seems prudent to develop a plan that encourages the continued use and development of the potential acquisitions. The use of a shuttle service seems to be contradictory to the idea of a low impact recreational area. It also seems like the shuttle will in the long term be a costly and ineffective method of revenue generation. As a whole, Americans are vehicle dependent and have become quite accustomed to traveling in their car, and would probably prefer it. This shuttle will not noticeably decrease the number of vehicles in the park and will inevitably cost more to operate than it will ever generate. Given the choice between the inconvenience of a shuttle system and driving their own vehicle, it is safe to assume that those who do possess a car will drive themselves. The idea that the young, disabled, and senior citizens will be enough to fund the shuttle is misled. Not only do the targeted groups (kids who can't drive but are old enough to be without a parent, disabled people without a vehicle and traveling alone, or elderly people unable to drive but capable of foot travel) represent an absolute minority of park visitors the creation of transit system on the hope that long term sponsorship from other interested parties will pay for it is presumptuous and wrong.

164	The severely limited access for rock climbing in the park is a problem. This park contain the most rock face resources of any state park in the NC system. And yet the climbing access will be limited to that recorded in a decidedly incomplete 20 year-old guidebook. For instance there are established routes left of what climbers refer to as the Hanging Chains wall that are accessed via the Rumbling Bald trails network. Outside the Rumbling Bald network, areas such as Ghost Town (near Round Top Mountain), the North Side of Rumbling Bald/Brackett Ridge, and Eagle Rock/The Pinnacles have over 20 years of climbing history. And routes have been established in the privately managed park by Fox Mountain Guides. All existing climbing areas should be open to climbing this includes Ghost Town, Eagle Rock, and the North Side. In addition, there should be a process by which the viability of climbing in the rest of the park should be evaluated on an area by area basis in the future. I understand that there are environmental concerns RE: rock climbing. In the draft of the master plan The Rumbling Bald area is held up as an example of climbers' impact. It should also be noted however that this area has gone unmanaged for more than 30 years. Furthermore, Rumbling Bald hosts an extensive boulder field, and the increasingly popular activity of bouldering has the greatest environmental impact when not managed. Roped climbing, in contrast, is much lower impact activity. The other climbing areas I have mentioned (Ghost Town, Eagle Rock, the North Side, etc.) have little to no bouldering potential and therefore would not be subject to the same kind of wear and tear. Another factor to consider when discussing these other established climbing areas is that none are pristine wilderness areas. The Ghost Town Area was previously home to a hotel as well as movie set. There was even once a chair lift from the town of Lake Lure up to the Ghost Town area. Likewise the Eagle Rock/Pinnacles is already a heavily impacted area. It was a traditional sight seeing area for locals through the late 20th century. I grew up just north of Bat Cave in the Broad River Township, and I recall riding up Shumont Road to climb the Pinnacles with my family. This area has long been used for hiking and rock climbing. There even exists a climbing guide for this area from the 1980s. Likewise, the North Side of Rumbling Bald lies less only a short distance from the paved roads and sprawling homes of a private development. In this aspect, it is no different from the cliffs and boulder fields of Rumbling Bald. I think we need only look to other State Parks in the NC system for examples of well managed and far-ranging climbers. The Hanging Rock State Park immediately comes to mind. There exist in Hanging Rock a multitude of well managed climbing areas. Climbers use minimal park resources for maximum recreation. We require only parking and a rough trail. We hike miles inside Hanging Rock to reach the appropriately named Two Mile boulderfield and/or Cook's Wall. And at these far flung climbing destinations our impact is minimal.
165	I would like to see the climbing aspects of the plan expanded from the existing spaces to open climbing at Chimney Rock, Shumont, Northside and some of the smaller crags like World's Edge or Eagle Rock. Climbers, in my experience, are some of the most environmentally minded and fastidious users of the outdoors. These areas are already known for their high ethical standards of minimizing bolted impact on the rock through traditional climbing (trad). Coordination with the local climbing associations to codify these standards for the park would ensure these standards stay in place, with the side effect of filtering the would-be climbers from the ones who are serious and passionate outdoorsmen.
166	what is the timetable for mountain biking trails to be opened?
167	I would like to see more access for climbing. The climbing community is aware of access issues and actively discusses ways to minimize impact. The climbing community also has the benefit of several well-organized groups (SEC, CCC) who are in touch with their members and assist with education as well as community service and trail days to help keep areas in good condition and accessible while respecting environmental impact issues.
168	The entire climbing section. This is the most short-sighted, poorly thought-out climbing management plan I have ever laid eyes on. Did you let the interns write this section? That being said, limiting the climbing to only the RB area and routes laid out in books that were last updated years ago seems 1) lazy and 2) contrary to the purpose of the state parks.
169	Shut down commercial uses. Increase recreational uses. Change status of climbing in the park from a special limited activity to one that is fundamentally no different from hiking. This is what climbing is.
170	Mountain biking was virtually left off the plan. This was a huge disappointment, especially after reading the comments from the public input meetings. There is obviously a need/desire from the public that was all but ignored.
171	More climbing access I disagree with the assessed environmental impact of climbing the trails with major erosion problems in the current climbing area are old jeep trails that can be found throughout the park and need to be dealt with. Although these trails are in the climbing area are not caused by climbing access. I agree that those trails need to be repaired and rerouted no formal trail building has taken place at rumbling bald just individuals following jeep trails
172	I am not sure I would change anything of significance. When I first read that the Cliff Trail would be permanently closed, and the Skyline Trail basically closed as well, I was a bit disappointed to think we would not again be able to experience the Park from those perspectives. However, from the day I heard the Chimney Rock would be a state park, I had wondered how it would be possible to administer those trails in a way such as to assure adequate public safety -- as well as to prevent long-term damage to the unique natural features of these areas. After reading the proposed plan, I can see that the solution arrived at is probably the right one.
173	The Cliff Trail needs to be reconsidered. Very disappointing.
174	I would strongly back the Alternative Plan #2-- Low Impact Recreation. As a recreational climber and hiker, I see this area as an incredible opportunity to enjoy these activities. I understand that these activities have the potential to create serious impact issues, erosion problems, etc., thus Alt Plan #2 seems to be the best plan to allow for both to co-exist. I feel strongly about environmental preservation and I think with careful planning/trail development, and keeping day use and access development to a minimum, these can certainly co-exist.
175	I would like a more open mind to opening up climbing in the gorge. There is plenty of potential for additional climbing routes in the area and keeping them closed only makes for a tense relationship between the climbers and the park management
176	"Lands owned by the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation presently used for rock climbing are already being negatively impacted by this historic use(10-24)." This vague statement is the cornerstone of your reasoning to restrict the growth of climbing in the area? This alienates one of the largest bodies of conservation minded men and women in the country. Climbers want areas to remain as wild as possible, much like serious hikers. Climbing is as much aesthetic as sport, and you'll be denying dollars from around the world coming from people will be seeking that aesthetic as much as the sport. Usually we aren't the guys dropping sandwich bags, bushwacking, and burning beer cans--we pick up the bags, help rehab trails, and usually use a stove. Expect to have to explain this line and the reasoning behind it relative to other recreational users.
177	Many of the arguments for restricting climbing in certain areas seem to be quite weak. Climbers were one of the main groups that contributed to the park's initial creation. It seems strange to harm their interests, as they clearly value the park's other natural attributes. Also, and I know this may be a controversial position so I am separating it from the above (which I feel is a reasonable position), I don't care at all about historical things. I support protecting wilderness. I could care less about ruins.





178	<p>Summary of response: I would like to change the rock climbing aspect of the draft plan. Why? The draft plan is far too restrictive of rock climbing. In fact, I would characterize the draft plan as being extremely and irrationally restrictive of rock climbing. The draft plan needs to allow for additional climbing site besides the south side of Rumbling Bald mountain. These additional sites have been detailed in an inventory previously sent to N.C. State Parks, as well as throughout the comments made in the initial comment period of the master plan drafting process. They include among others, Round Top Mountain ('Ghost Town'), World's Edge and Cane Creek, Chimney Rock Attraction, and Cloven Cliffs. These additional climbing sites should be allowed following an appropriate site impact evaluation process, on a site-by-site basis. Climbers are ready and willing collaborators in this process, and can be relied upon to provide information, man-power and funding. Please read further for additional comments, and thank you. In depth response: I would like to change the rock climbing aspect of the draft plan. Why? Because the draft plan is far too restrictive of rock climbing. In fact, I would characterize the draft plan as being extremely and irrationally restrictive of rock climbing. In Table 10.1, the matrix of proposed activities allows for rock climbing in a single location, Rumbling Bald. The draft plan states that this site is mostly made up of privately owned land; it indicates a small portion is owned by the state. It also states that CRSP is entirely closed to climbing except at this Rumbling Bald location. With such a small percentage of state-owned land open to rock climbing at Rumbling Bald, and such a huge percentage of additional potential climbing sites elsewhere in the park, the draft plan is therefore allowing virtually NO rock climbing within Chimney Rock State Park. Why, when rock climbers are among the largest user group in the park, when rock climbers were such a predominant voice in the master planning processes' first comment period, when rock climbers helped conceive of and initiate the idea for CRSP in the first place, when rock climbers purchased a 6-acres portion of Rumbling Bald's boulder field that protects the federally listed White irisette, when rock climbers are pro-conservation and wish to do no harm to important natural communities and, finally, when rock climbers would be an economic boon to a depressed county in the off-season—WHY are rock climbers given virtually no access to the climbing resources throughout CRSP? There seems to be one single reason: Significant Natural Heritage Areas. The draft plan does not explicitly state this, but the implicit conclusion incipiently seeping through the vague draft plan language is clear enough: climbing will damage Natural Heritage Areas. On what basis is the claim that rock climbing will threaten, damage or destroy CRSP's significant Natural Heritage sites made? No basis is provided in the draft management plan. In fact, there is no basis for this claim. When the immense management scope of a 5-10 year master planning document is at stake, it is an outrageously disappointing state of affairs to find that management decisions for one of the parks' largest, most active, most responsible user-groups—climbers—are being given virtually no access to climbing resources in the park BASED ON ASSUMPTIONS. CRSP is a public park, paid for and created with tax payer's money. When climbers have been a part of the parking planning process from the very beginning, and when the climbing public indicates its desire to have more access to climbing resources in the park, this short shrift in the draft plan is profoundly unfair and simply for no good reason. The fact is that there are no scientific studies to support the claim that climbers threaten or will damage Natural Heritage sites in CRSP. That's right, there has been no formal study, evaluation or observation of climbers impacts on such sites—ever—nothing to count as something even akin to evidence that climbers threaten or destroy Natural Heritage areas. In other words, this longterm, far-reaching draft management document proposed to plan and manage for climbing based on a blatant and weak assumption. This is unacceptable. Make no mistake: rock climbers understand the importance of Natural Heritage areas and want to see them protected. Within the context of appropriate collaboration, communication and rock climbing site impact evaluations, rock climbers are pro-conservation and do not wish to threaten, damage or destroy valuable Natural Heritage sites. Rock climbers understand the conservation value of CRSP, and Hickory Nut Gorge's globally and nationally significant flora and fauna. Rock climbers want to be partners in protecting these important sites, and these unique and rare plant and animal species. Let me provide an example of how climbers are proactively stewarding the significant natural heritage of Hickory Nut Gorge and CRSP, and protecting a priority area for CRSP acquisition and expansion. The Carolina Climbers' Coalition (CCC) purchased a 6-acre portion of the Rumbling Bald boulder field, with the intention of saving a popular climbing resource from development and later transferring it to CRSP. The boulder field purchased is an area that's likely the most popular climbing area in the park. Through communication with the state biologist, the CCC learned that the property hosts a significant population of the globally rare White irisette plant. This state biologist, and later another that the CCC hired to conduct a site visit, verified that the regular "disturbance" created by climbers walking past the irisette greatly enhanced their ability to thrive and reproduce. As it turns out, White irisette needs disturbance of this type to live. The CCC committed to ensuring this plant population continues to thrive, and has decided that an additional biological inventory of their property is necessary so that the important natural resources present can be protected from impacts. This example is instructive for the draft master planning process. If a management decision was made to close the bouldering area on the assumption that climbing in the area would destroy the White irisette, it's very likely the plant would be out-competed by other more dominant species. Thanks to good communication between climbers and biologists however, climbers continue to use the foot paths that enhance this important population of White irisette. Again, the point of this story is simple: assumptions are not a sound platform for park planning or resource protection, particularly when such important natural and recreational resources area at stake. Of course I don't mean to generalize the White irisette example to all areas of CRSP, and I realize each natural community and plant species is different. But that's precisely why I maintain our view that the draft master plan is far too restrictive. Without collaborative, scientific study of climbing impacts on particular natural communities, at particular climbing sites, the perception that rock climbing is ultimately destructive is just an assumptions with no factual basis. In other words, it's just not true. The master plan must include language that allows for the possibility of additional, new climbing sites through an appropriate site evaluation process.</p>
179	There are many other great climbing areas that need to be secured for climbing access around rumbling bald! Dont leave these out of the plan. We have a chance now to secure access.
180	I would like to see the entire park open for climbing with the exception of specified areas of interest such as chimney rock proper, or x amount of feet each side hickory nut falls. The vast majority of cliff line on the park will see little to zero use from any group besides climbers and with a plan to approve the bolting of new lines or the construction of new trails, climbing can be a popular use without impacting other uses. While the opening of new areas will undoubtedly increase visitors for this use in the area, it will spread them over a much larger area, thereby decreasing the focused impact currently seen at Rumbling Bald.
181	Why is the climbing so restricted? Climbers are active managers of our resources and we should be allowed full access.
182	I would like to see more access to climbing on the cliffs at Chimney Rock Park side, because unlike hiking trails quality climbing areas are few and far between. With proper management climbing routes can be established in areas of unique ecosystems, for example Linville Gorge, Looking Glass Rock, Ship Rock, Whiteside Mountain, Table Rock. Just ask the USFS.
183	Climbing areas on Chimney Rock, Worlds Edge, Cloven Cliffs, Round Top Mountain and the N. Side of Rumbling Bald Mountain need to be opened. Basically all areas that are state owned that have rock climbing and bouldering resources need to be open. As the rangers have witnessed first hand, the climbing area at Rumbling Bald is extremely valuable. People come from all over this country to climb there and then ask why we have difficult access to the other climbing areas? Fox Mountain Guides does not need to be the only resource to climbing on Chimney Rock. We all pay our taxes in this state and we will not pay Fox Mountain Guides to take competent climbers climbing there. That is just a completely unsustainable way to promote relations between climbers and the park service. Climbing has been going on for over 30 years in this gorge and it is steeped in history. The lack of acknowledgment of the climbing community here is a poor way of communicating to this valuable user group that has had better land manager relationships than the park service is attempting to achieve.
184	Please do not close or limit the access to Ghost Town and the North Side of Rumbling Bald for climbing.
185	I would like to see more of the park opened to rock climbing. The area is largely untapped. Please look at other climbing-friendly parks as examples (Yosemite, The New River Gorge, The Red River Gorge..), all have had positive impacts on their bottom-line due to climbing. Don't forget that the rock climbing community is dedicated to maintaining their access/privilege whenever called upon. See the Carolina Climbers Association to see when/where their next volunteer day is.



186	The idea of closing the Cliffs Trail and parts of the Exclamation Point Trail is the worst part of the plan. The Cliffs Trail is the most thrilling part of the park for those who can't rock climb. To close the Cliffs for safety reasons and then allow rock climbing elsewhere is absolutely insane. Yes there is a degree of risk but the state does not assume that risk. People slip and die in other state parks AND I might add, on flat state roads. There is simply no reason to close these areas. I'm opposed to the entire plan on the basis of this. What is the use in making a destination where the best parts can't be accessed?
187	As noted in Chapter 10 of the Master Plan, climbing and bouldering is a significant recreation activity in the park. Rather than limit rock climbing to the "impacted areas where rock climbing is currently allowed" I would like to recommend that (1) a Climbing Advisory Council be created and (2) a zoning system developed to manage climbing in Chimney Rock State Park (CRSP). (1) Advisory Council Includes at least five (5) to six (6) individuals given the responsibility to review proposals for the placement (or replacement) of fixed hardware, approval or denial of new route proposals based on objective criteria (See Laurel Knob Management Plan for examples), and for acting as an advisory board to mitigate potential conflicts between climbers and park officials. Council membership include one (1) or more members from park management, a (1) biologist, and 3 climbers representing a mix of interests (boulder, trad/sport, guide service) (2) Zoning Zoning would involve dividing the park into five zones: High Impact, Medium Impact, Low Impact, Unique Management Area and Closed to New Routes. Criteria will need to be established for each zone. I have defined each zone below: High Impact Climbing is the primary use of these areas and is anticipated to create significant impact to natural resources. The impacts in this zone are considered to be acceptable since concentration of climbing activity reduces impacts to other areas in the park. Medium Impact Climbing is one of many uses in these areas and though the impact on natural resources may be noticeable it is minor and does not interfere with other park uses. Low Impact Climbing activity in these areas produces minimal impact visually or physically to natural, cultural, and scenic resources. Unique Management Area Climbing activity in this zone will be managed because of the pristine nature of the area. Climbing resources within this area are considered to be very high with significant variety. The park manager recognizes that numerous routes may be developed resulting in a high level of use and associated ecological and social impacts. Visual impact of high use may impact other park visitors. This area will require that both park management and the Climbing Advisory Council and climbing community work cooperatively to manage climbing in this zone to minimize resource impacts while allowing for high levels of use. Closed to New Routes Routes will not be established in areas of the park not designated for climbing or areas where there exist unique biotic and abiotic resources. Aram Attarian, PhD Raleigh, NC
188	Allow rock climbing at other areas!! Some of the areas suggested to be closed have had climber use for quite a while before(Ghost Twn, Hanging chain)To just say no is short sighted with a recurring and growing segment of the population. Climbers on a whole will do more visiting/over-nighting(\$\$) P.S. I have climbed here for over 20 yrs.
189	The need to maintain access to current rock climbing areas. Don't restrict access where climbing is currently taking place.
190	open more rock to rock climbing. rock climbers organized and lobbied for the parks' creation and now they are being 'shafted' by the limiting of climbing to only a very small part of the park. this brings the fairness of the planning process into question; it appears that the integrity of the planning process has been compromised by an internal agenda.
191	Chapter 10. Rock climbing should not be limited to Chimney Rock, as it seems there are many fine climbing areas in the park. Limiting climbing to one location will concentrate demand for parking and trails at Chimney Rock. Rock climbing is a fast-growing sport, and the text indicates that the Chimney Rock area is stressed already.
192	I don't have many concerns about the draft plan. I would like to minimize cost to enter the park, as it is quite expensive to drive into the park.
193	I strongly disagree with limiting climbing in certain areas such as the northside, Eagle Rock, Shumont, Ghost Town, Chimney Rock and World's Edge crags. I feel that climbing has little impact compared to other user groups and Chimney Rock State Park contains some of the best climbing found in the area. Furthermore, climbers tend to be very good land stewards. Often organizing cleanups, trail maintenance, and have a history with working hand-in-hand with the national forest service and state parks across the country.
194	All plans should include access to the Skyline Trail and Cliff Trail... there will be overwhelming public demand to reopen access to Hickory Nut Falls, and if not freely accessible, will result in unsafe attempts to access those areas without supervision. Best to make the trails open and safe.
195	There needs to be additional open access to the wealth of rock climbing opportunities that the park would provide. Rock climbing brings a significant contribution to the local park and economy. Enlarging the park and rock climbing opportunities could turn this park into a national destination which would provide a boom for the local economy.
196	I would open rock climbing to any and all areas that are also going to allow hiking. Hiking will have many times the volume of rock climbing, and it would be a waste of resources to ban climbing in an area already accommodating hiking.
197	I believe that the areas to be open to climbing must be expanded to include all areas currently developed by the North Carolina climbing community. The reliance upon out of date documentation of climbing routes to define those areas where climbing is taking place and will continue to be permitted is a terrible mistake. The North Carolina climbing community is one of the largest on the East Coast and is one of the most environmentally aware in the US. Implementation of thoughtful climbing management and environmental management plans would provide a terrific recreational resource while protecting the natural resources of the park. Climbing can be managed in a responsible manner that ensures that all interested parties win. Reopen all areas that have been climbed historically, whether documented in obsolete documentation or not.
198	If I could change something in the draft plan, it would be the lack of expanded rock climbing opportunities in and around the gorge. Limiting climbing access to just Rumbling Bald is shortsighted. Areas such as Ghost Town, the north side of Rumbling Bald, Worlds Edge, Blue Rock and Chimney Rock proper contain hundreds of climbing routes and have a climbing history that goes back to the 1970's. I know there is a need to balance conservation with access. This can be done with a proper plan. Please take this into account and do not rule out ever having climbing access in these areas.
199	Dear. State Park Planners, First of all I would like to thank you for reading my comments here and I hope you will take my suggestions into consideration. Public Lands providing world class rock climbing are a rarity in the southeast. I have lived and climbed in the southeast, the west, and in England, and the southeast has way more cliffs that are off limits to climbing than anywhere else I've been. I think this is do to a misunderstanding of climbers by non-climbers and land managers and the abundance of private land. Though the Hickory Nut Gorge area does not have the 3000 foot cliffs of Yosemite, the climbing is just as good. Thus I am extremely disappointed that the draft plan eliminates access to over 200 established climbing routes on state park land but not on the south face of rumbling bald. I would recommend re-establishing climbing access to the north face of rumbling bald, the south face of round top mountain, the world's edge cliffs, and providing access to some climbing areas on the north face of chimney rock mtn. to non-guided parties. Climbers have been climbing at these areas for over 20 years and I understand they are on state park land and access from state park land would be practical. Climbers are a responsible user group and are willing to do whatever it takes to work with the state park so that climbing access is not a burden to other user groups or the state park system. Climbers are also willing to work to establish sustainable trails to climbing areas in order to prevent spider trails, erosion problems, and minimize impact to endangered plants. I hope that we can get access to at least one if not all of these additional areas incorporated into the final management plan. Thanks, Andrew McDowell
200	I would like rock climbing to be allowed at more areas. The reasoning of "natural heritage sites" does not make sense, as then hiking would also not be allowed in the vicinity of these areas-as both activities have virtually identical amounts of impact on the immediate environment. Well maintained and planned trails, camouflaged bolt hangers, and a detailed climbing management plan make climbing a very low impact activity if properly implemented. State and National parks with far larger user bases fairly manage climbers without them tearing up sensitive areas (Eldorado Canyon State Park, CO; RMNP, CO, Red Rock National Conservation Area, NV, Yosemite, CA....)



201	I think it would be reasonable to open up more of Chimney Rock park to climbing access. The reason Rumbling bald area is so overly impacted is because of the high quantity of users that are restricted to this area for climbing, as well as the fact that there has never been any upkeep of this land/trails until recently. much of recent maintenance which has been motivated by climbers alone. Climbing can be less impactful than mountain biking and regular hiking practices given proper infrastructure for the activity and land upkeep. I think it is possible to maintain natural heritage, delicate ecosystems and meet the needs of users that desire to climb. By opening more areas to climbers, this will diffuse much of the impact that is a problem in the Rumbling Bald area as well as provide climbing activities year round, as Rumbling Bald is not ideal for climbing in the summer months due to it's south facing nature.
202	Access to rock climbing should be dramatically revised within the plan. Climbing is a long standing tradition to the area and compromises should be made to better allow the continuation of this tradition.
203	The exclusion of Round Top (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbling Bald from climbing. In order for Chimney Rock to become a world class climbing destination those two areas must be open. The south side of Rumbling Bald as outlined in the guidebooks mentioned is only a small fraction of the already established climbing area and arguably not the best climbing the park has to offer. Climbing routes in those areas have existed for more than 20 years. Climbers and the local coalitions already maintain these areas and trails without assistance from any paid state agencies and take on "major" trail work annually. Much of the cliffs at Round Top are owned by the state park currently and are not on private land, while the North Side is owned by the TNC which goes against 10-24 paragraph 2 of this draft. The only thing required to open Round Top to climbing would be a small gravel parking area, which could exist on state park land. This would also alleviate congestion at the Boys Camp parking area. Furthermore, the gift of a large portion of the boulder fields from the CCC to the state park should show that climbers are good land stewards and are deserving of more climbing access at Chimney Rock.
204	There are several climbing areas with long histories of use that were not opened to climbers. The existing climbing area at rumbling bald is a tiny fraction of the climbing available in this new park. Eagle Rock has a 20 plus year history of climbing and a couple dozen routes. North side has 20 year history and over 100 routes. Ghost Town has 20 plus year history and probably 100 routes and easy access. World's Edge has room for 100 routes. Opening the northside, shumont, round top, or world's edge cliffs would be a great start and would alleviate some of the congestion at the existing open areas.
205	I'm very disappointed with the recreational access in this proposed plan. It is very clear from the current use of Rumbling Bald that you are all but completely ignoring your largest user groups. Rock climbing is incredibly popular at Rumbling Bald and would be at the remainder of CRSP as well. The same would be true for mountain biking. While the need to preserve the wilderness environment is important, completely blocking access to user groups is not the answer. Usage impact from climbers is a growing concern, but these problems are much better addressed by allowing access and building better resources, including trails, restroom facilities, and trash receptacles, not by excluding one of your largest user groups. There are already several successful climbing areas on State Park lands, including Pilot Mtn and Hanging Rock SP, but there is a lot of room for improving access for climbers on State lands. Some of the best rock climbing with a long and rich history has been taken away from the climbing community, including the remainder of Pilot Mtn and now, apparently Chimney Rock SP. Very Disappointing.
206	1.The Hickory Nut Gorge Transit Circulator 2.Proposed Entrance Road 3.Improvements to Tunnel, Elevator, and Shaft and other attractions 4. Little change in terms of additional rock climbing, hiking, mtn biking. Reasons: 1. I do not think it will be anymore efficient to use shuttle service utilizing a one way route. Also using tax-payer funds such as this is ridiculous. The main priority should be securing as much land as possible to make this the best state park in the country. I see the shuttle as unnecessary expense. 2. As with the Shuttle, maintenance on one road has already been proven to be costly. Thus the original sale of Chimney rock to the state of NC. Therefore, this new road will be an unnecessary costly addition likely to cost NC millions of dollars as elevation, surface, rock and environmental impact should be taken into consideration. 3. The tunnel and elevator were a ridiculous addition to the park in the first place and considering the cost should be neglected. 4. Of little cost to the state and of great importance to millions of residents throughout the US is the recreational opportunities at Chimney Rock State Park. From reviewing this early Master Plan I am very, very disappointed. As it seems most potential opportunities could be found in environmentally significant areas. And caring deeply for the environment myself, I feel it is important to protect these areas. But totally shutting down access is not the best way. As proper management and maintaining access is important to promote interest and support of these wild and beautiful places. Along with promoting outdoor recreational opportunities such as rock climbing, mtn biking, and hiking. For NC to have the most beautiful and spectacular park in the nation and not allow access to areas such as the cliffs near Bat Cave and the Cliffs near Round Top Mtn. is doing a disservice to all citizens. Furthermore, I am very much disappointed in how rock climbing and hiking were addressed in the Master Plan. Specifically, rock climbers were mentioned to have negatively impacted other areas... however, I find this information false and misleading as rock has little impact further than the hiking involved. In my opinion, state parks such as Crowders Mtn and Pilot Mtn enjoy a high user base and the parks have been very successful for such reasons. Most importantly, recreational opportunities should be the focus of Chimney Rock State Park as without these activities (rock climbing, hiking, mtn biking, and fishing) future generations will have little to no value for nature as they will not have any outdoor activities to enjoy.

### QUESTION 3 - DO YOU HAVE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS?

1	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate because it was not advertised state wide in newspapers or an equine oriented publications I know about. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity. Effort to download the Master Plan takes hours, not a moment as suggested. Equestrian comments from the public workshop have not been addressed
2	I sincerely hope the importance of outdoor recreation will not be overlooked. As our country loses more and more jobs it's important to have not only the money outdoor recreation brings to small towns but to have places people can enjoy without having to spend the money they don't have. Outdoor recreation is an affordable and preferable vacation for a lot of people. Another plus is the more people get out and enjoy the environment the more they will come to appreciate it. This will lead them to take more action to protect it while maintaining their access.
3	I would like to see the camps in Western NC have an opportunity to be a part of the planning and have opportunities to bring in commercial groups.
4	The plan doesn't appear to explain any risk assessment of the plan. What are the downfalls and who and how will they be affected. What are the liability exposures. Additional safety measures or resources. Increased Fire department resources? Cost? Increased emergency services resources? Cost? Infrastructure? Increased security resources? Cost? Enforcement Cost? What segment of outdoor use is being excluded from the plan? Lawsuits regarding access? More people in the woods increase frequency of injury, death, destruction of property by trash or fires.
5	CRSP is started on the right track and I would encourage the park management to explore more ways to bring in attraction and outdoor recreation visitors. Under the current plan I see the attraction development happening creating shuttle routes, a visitor center, and ease of access with the creation of new parking areas and roads. I support all of these as they will allow many users to enjoy the natural beauty of CRSP. My fear is that the avid outdoor recreation visitors experience will be diminished under a plan that does allow for adequate trails for mountain biking or the future development of rock climbing. North Carolina state parks have and continue to manage several state parks which appeal to both the attraction visitor and the avid outdoor recreation visitor. I would encourage CRSP to continue to explore the creation of an area which will provide both with a world class experience.

6	I would like to reiterate previous thoughts. 1) When people are seeking interface with wilderness, trail signs are counter to the whole experience. No Trail Signs. A good map and a compass is more fitting. A gps is fine, too. Please do not build trail improvements, except those that are absolutely necessary for erosion abatement. 2) Climbing is a great educational tool and having some bolts for belay setups would make things go faster and smoother for group leaders to set up. 3) Please allow people to be responsible for their own safety. They may need to sign a waiver so that the state doesn't feel that they must carry the responsibility for everyone's safety.
7	CRSP is started on the right track and I would encourage the park management to explore more ways to bring in attraction and outdoor recreation visitors. Under the current plan I see the attraction development happening creating shuttle routes, a visitor center, and ease of access with the creation of new parking areas and roads. I support all of these as they will allow many users to enjoy the natural beauty of CRSP. My fear is that the avid outdoor recreation visitors experience will be diminished under a plan that does allow for adequate trails for mountain biking or the future development of rock climbing. North Carolina state parks have and continue to manage several state parks which appeal to both the attraction visitor and the avid outdoor recreation visitor. I would encourage CRSP to continue to explore the creation of an area which will provide both with a world class experience. Ben Williams Outdoor Adventure Director Falling Creek Camp Tuxedo, NC ben@fallingcreek.com 828-243-6526 begin_of_the_skype_highlighting 828-243-6526 end_of_the_skype_highlighting
8	It is exciting that these important recreation lands will become part of the public domain, and although it is hard to foresee the future, they have always been important to our summer camp population, especially Rumbling Bald and other climbing areas. Thanks, Gordon Strayhorn, Owner/Director Camp Illahee Brevard, NC
9	This area is an excellent location for many people in North Carolina and the region to access such a beautiful and diverse property. We are thrilled that the public will have access to this land. We know that it is very difficult to plan today for all of the uses for the park area in the first planning process and therefore want to make sure we officially request the ability to research, plan and add trails for hiking, mountain biking and equestrian use and access to educational features, additional rock climbing routes, river and lake access, and any other recreational use deemed necessary, on a case by case basis in the future. On behalf of the North Carolina Youth Camping Association, we see first-hand that education in the outdoors is very important to not only youth, but the entire population. Chimney Rock State Park has such a range of opportunities for the public and we are excited about these plans for use. We thank you for the opportunity to add our comments and your hard work to determine the best uses for the park land. - Yates Pharr - Secretary of the North Carolina Youth Camping Association and Director/Owner of Falling Creek Camp For Boys in Tuxedo, NC
10	Forget the Visitor Center - too expensive for what you get out of it. This is a PARK. Focus on outdoor recreation, not a big building where people walk around and gawk at exhibits. If you want to see trees and animals, go OUTSIDE and see real ones, not photos and stuffed animals.
11	Please consider the horsemen and women
12	I commend Greenways for the compromise between recreation and natural resource protection, and hope that in the future, natural resource protection will continue to be the main focus of the state park.
13	Don't homogenize the park and make it similar to any other state park. Chimney Rock Park is unique and its unique features need to be open for people to access and experience. If you close off everything because it might require some creative thinking or it "complicates" a ranger's job that is a poor excuse. Open up areas of the park that have been enjoyed for years. Don't try to jam it into your "state park box".
14	nope.
15	Growing up in the area and seeing what has happened to areas around CRP, when there is no plan and no one to monitor what happens, it is not good. CRP is currently a beautiful place to visit, and well maintained, and has preserved the heritage for which it is famous. You are about to change a lot of that....please be careful. Be sure you are using the right reasons for change.....safety? it is working so far as is....and has for YEARS. Please listen to what the people say...don't base your changes on what you have done at other parks: CRP is unique.
16	Please open additional climbing areas. I am sure the climbing community (CCC/Access Fund etc) will support you in creating more climbing opportunities in the park.
17	Nice job! looks like an exciting Master Plan.
18	I first climbed at Rumbling Bald in 1994. There was not another soul around aside from my climbing partner and I. Today was the first time I've been to Rumbling Bald to climb in about 3 years. I have mixed feelings about seeing 50+ vehicles in the climber's parking lot today and understand that it will be a challenge to manage the increased number of climbers. However, I think the park can do a better job of working with climbers, trading trail building labor with more legal access to crags for climbing. To make the climbing experience more enjoyable, I think the park should also 1) ban dogs from all bouldering and climbing areas (the dogs get in fights with one another and there is dog poo accumulating in areas around the boulders) and 2) notify that climbers are to be out by dark, not 6pm which is currently posted. Sometimes things happen when you are 200 feet up - a rope gets stuck, a climb takes longer than expected, etc. - it is aggravating enough to have to deal with these unforeseen events (this is part of any nature-based recreation activity), but then to have to get reprimanded by a LEO for not being out by dark is a bit much. Climbers don't need baby-sitting and LEO could use their time more wisely than to wait on climbers who are late in getting out.
19	It's hard to answer the first two: the files take a very long time to download. I'm concerned that there are no equestrian trails designated. If mountain bike trails can be sustainably constructed, horse trails can as well. Please consider extending the comment period. I've just found out about it and know many people that would like to contribute their comments as well. Notice of public comment and meetings was not made state-wide for a state park. I think an extension of the comment period would enable others throughout the state to contribute their ideas as well.
20	Be sure to handle the entrance and exits carefully so as to maintain the character of Chimney Rock Village and it's merchants viability.
21	Please be as inclusive as possible so that we can encourage more growth of opportunities for riding in our wonderful state.
22	One of my favorite places in the world! As a member of the Access Fund and Southeastern Climbers coalition, I want to see this area protected for all recreational groups. I shudder at the thought of it being developed with houses. This is such a special valley, it really has potential to be a nationwide destination for all kinds of activities. Climbers are some of the most responsible of the user groups that frequent the area, keep us in mind!
23	I really like the conservation push behind the plan. I think its great to preserve and educate people about resources. I am an avid equestrian and I love to enjoy nature with my horse. Horses are not very damaging to a park if rules are in place and trails are properly maintained and rested/not over used. I would like to see more horse access.
24	No, thank you.
25	NC State Parks and rock climbers have a long history of working together to protect and expand climbing areas while protecting the natural resources. It is vital for the future success of the state park and the local economy to not severely limit the recreational use of a public park purchased with public dollars. The future users of the park (the public) have commented and their input should be weighed equally to that of The Nature Conservancy.
26	thank you for considering more horse trails



27	<p>The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. • Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.</p>
28	I AM A CLIMBER FIRST AND FOREMOST SO OBVIOUSLY I WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE CLIMBING ACCESS AVAILABLE ALONG WITH SMALL PRIMITIVE CAMPING.
29	PLEASE INCLUDE EQUESTRIAN TRAILS!!!!!! It's really not asking that much to include water and a parking lot!!!
30	I am a long time member of the Nature Conservancy and Environmental Defense Fund contributor. Your claims of climbing being bad for the environment while promoting more roads, buildings, horses (which bring in invasive species) and a bus line, is wrong. WRONG, experts are often wrong, get over it and take corrective action. Increase climbing access in an environmentally friendly way. The current plan will lead to more climbing accidents and more environmental damage.
31	<p>The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.</p>
32	As a taxpayer I am extremely frustrated with how the process was done. The state does not seem to be following an open door policy by making attempts to let ALL citizens have a say. A grassroots email is what let me know that this was being rammed thru with limited citizens input due to how it was publicized. Not everyone lives around Raleigh and this should have been in all papers across the state as well as have all recreational groups (ie horse associations) not just bikers and hikers notified of the plan.
33	Please don't limit the climbing areas! Yes, the ones available are wonderful, but this area has a wealth of climbing available, but we are not permitted to use it! A state park should open these areas up for people's enjoyment. Maintained (although primitive) trails will encourage less erosion and will allow for greater use of the outdoor areas. My feeling is that the majority of the negative impacts seen at the climbing areas today are due to the area not being "sanctioned". Increased access will encourage everyone to take care of what we gain!
34	<p>I would like to see increased access to the world class rock climbing available in the Hickory Nut Gorge. The draft plans seems to offer no increased access to places like "Ghost Town/Silver City," North Side of Rumbling Bald Mnt, Eagle Rock, Shumont Mnt, World's Edge or Cloven Cliffs. These resources represent world class climbing destinations that could significantly impact improved economic development, decreased environmental burden on Rumbling Bald, and increased support through climber volunteerism for infrastructure maintenance and improvement. Climbers are a responsible user group and one of the most active user groups in the Hickory Nut Gorge. Climbers have an intense interest in access to and preservation of the rock resources in the area. The local communities of Bat Cave, Chimney Rock, and Lake Lure could benefit significantly from the economic impact of visiting climbers, particularly during the cool weather months when other tourism typically diminishes. Climbers have been very active in supporting the acquisition of land for the new state park and would like to continue in these endeavors. The draft plan seems to disregard the tremendous efforts of the climbing community with no clear explanation. Please take moral action by modifying the draft plan to recognize the input of numerous climbers. Please include access to the world class climbing offered at places like Ghost Town/Silver City, Eagle Rock, Shumont Mountain, North Side Rumbling Bald, World's Edge, and Cloven Cliff. Thanks for your support.</p>
35	<p>Please listen to your majority. Have people sign binding waivers, whatever, just please reconsider shutting away those trails forever. Also, as a side note, it would be fair to verbally tell any people upgrading to annual passes which places will be closed during their pass time. My mother's employer took the whole staff to the park and my mother upgraded her pass. She is still unaware that the whole upper half of the park will be closed for a large portion of her pass duration. I realize it is on the website, but this was not explained to her. Of course you may lose money, but it's only fair in order to avoid bad feelings. Since the changes, we are no longer passholders, and depending on how the state handles the park during this next year, we may not be again, as much as it pains me to say. There aren't any trails like the Cliff or Skyline, but there are many other beautiful North Carolina trails that we can hike for free.</p>
36	<p>As I mentioned in the planning session, I still believe that 80% of visitors to the state park (that are interested in hiking) will want to stand on top of Chimney Rock and hike the existing trails (if they were all opened). Putting resources toward getting this done would seem to be the highest leverage solution - building trails into wilderness areas will, over time, be wonderful additions, but that shouldn't be the immediate / 5 year concern - with the state's limited resources these days, improving what already exists would seem to make the most sense. From what I read of the public comments, there is strong sentiment to re-open these upper Park trails - I hope you'll listen to the voices of the people who helped make this Park come into being!</p>
37	Thanks for your work on this!
38	The Cliff Trail needs to be completed. Ttis trail was uniques to all parks. People from all over the world came here for that trail. Why are there no plans to re-open this trail?



39	I would like to express my concerns with the proposal to move the Entrance of Chimney Rock State Park to Proctor Road. Proctor Road is currently a small one lane mountain road primarily used by the 18 homeowners that live in small mountain neighborhood. The lots are large, and all the owners are very conservation minded. We enjoy the privacy, quietness, and natural beauty of our land on Cane Creek Mountain. As your report confirms, Cane Creek Mountain contains numerous threatened species. In hiking around our property we have seen at least two threatened plant species. We also frequently sight large black bears foraging for food. We are extremely concerned that a large influx of human traffic will harm the existing flora and fauna. Clearly, the local bear will be adversely affected by the human traffic. They will either move one, or even worse, interact with the park visitors. Proctor Road is a very dangerous road. All the local inhabitants have stories of treacherous experiences in trying to navigate the road in poor weather. Visibility is poor, the road is steep, and curves dangerous. Additionally, the entry to the road is rather ambiguous. Thus, it is highly unlikely than merely widening the road will achieve the stated goals. The entry is across the street from the beach, and a mere ½ a mile from the marina. Diverting 200,000+ people to the new entrance will certainly require completely changing the entrance all the way to Memorial Highway. Ingress and egress from Memorial Highway will cause traffic jams because of all the additional traffic, and will likely require widening Memorial Highway and other traffic mitigation techniques. Pedestrian safety going to and from the beach will need to be addressed. Clearly this is going to substantially add to the cost of the project. I doubt that the shop owners in Chimney Rock will substantially benefit by making the current entrance an optional exit. The vast majority of the traffic will choose the easiest exit road. Traffic using the current road will crawl to a trickle. Circulation will not be improved, because the vast majority of visitors will enter and exit through the new entrance completely bypassing the shops in Chimney Rock. The shop owners in Chimney Rock will suffer financial harm. The money spent on the new entrance will deprive the park of essential resources that would be best spent preserving the pristine nature of the Gorge, opening new trails, and maintaining the existing trails. It will cause harm to local wildlife including threatened species. It will worsen traffic patterns around the Marina and Beach. It will cause economic harm to the shop owners in Chimney Rock and home owners on Proctor Road. In essence, moving the entrance is the most expensive option and will to do the most harm to the park and community.
40	Overall plan looks great for our future. Please, please don't close the Skyline/Cliff trails.
41	I would like to see more access to some of the fantastic climbing area's beyond the south face of Rumbling Bald mountain. Climbing has a long and rich history on almost every cliff in the gorge, and it should be acknowledged that the "environmental impact" has been very minimal, especially when compared to the network of roadways, the gift shop/restaurant, and even the elevator shaft in Chimney Rock proper. There is no reason to believe that climbing cannot coincide with conservation, especially with ecologically friendly built trails. Increasing access would also establish this area as a world class destination and bring a much needed boost to the local (and state) economy. It would also significantly reduce the amount of traffic condensed to one single area (Rumbling Bald), which would of course also help with reducing visitor impact and resolve some of the current parking issues.. The proposed construction of an additional parking lot for Rumbling Bald near the end of Boys Camp Rd would be a great access point to the north side of the mountain. The infrastructure is already in place for accessing the climbing area's at Round Top -- aka Ghost Town. Also, of special note is the condition of the trails on the south face of Rumbling Bald. It is worth mentioning (and should be quite obvious to most people), that they generally are not climber built trails. Most are old logging roads that have been washed out and in disrepair since climbers first started coming there years ago. Most of the erosion on those trails cannot be attributed to climbers, and should be closed down upon re-routing. If it were up to the climbing community and not the exceptionally slow progress of the bureaucratic process, this issue could likely be resolved within a couple of trail work days (and it would be at cost to the state since it would be entirely volunteer).
42	Please do not exclude horses from parks funded by all state residents.
43	I WOULD BE HAPPY TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY DISCUSSION GROUP. I AM A MEMBER OF BACK COUNTRY HORSEMEN OF PISGAH. I LOVE OUR MOUNTAINS AND TREASURE OR STATE PARKS. trailside_farm@bellsouth.net Christine Vigue 828-231-3145
44	Horse Trails!
45	It's a great park - but we stopped going there once we arrived and discovered the two best trails were closed. It's just not the same. Keep the park unique and dramatic. It works.
46	horse trails
47	no
48	I believe advertising of such park Draft Master Plan should have reached all of North Carolina in the initial discussion of park plans.
49	There is a need in the plan to address opening further climbing areas as they come into the park in the future as opposed to a blanket statement saying that will not happen.
50	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails and equestrians should be offered the same access.
51	I am excited to see what comes of the new park!
52	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
53	No additional comments
54	obviously provisions to include mountain biking were accomodated; so the same benefits should be extended to the equestrian community. need to modify plans before continuing forward.
55	Its a great idea for a state park but lets not forget all the people out there - alot of horse enthusiasts have a hard enough time finding peaceful, safe trails as it it and now the idea of taking such a beautiful trail experience away really stinks.



56	I heard that a notice was made in May for a public workshop. That notice should have been run in all major newspapers of WNC especially and certainly statewide. It should have been on TV and probably radio. None of the equestrian people I know, nor their organizations were contacted and because they didn't know of the public input opportunity, they were underrepresented - and the wrong impression that they "don't care" was circulated around. Mountain Bike groups were contacted... and strongly represented.... favoritism, sounds like it to me. Who was here first, equestrian interests or mountain bike interests? It is ridiculous for bikers to be favored over equestrian interests... for any reason, at the very least, both should be allowed to use the trails. The length of the public comment period is too short... it needs to be extended for at least 60 days.... people need more time to access, review and adequately respond to the Master Plan... especially those people that are riders and those people who like horseback riding, even if they don't, and should be given an opportunity to stick up for their equestrian friends. If any activity should be governed or omitted because of the wear and tear on trails it should be trail biking.... speed and knobby tires = trail erosion..... one short walk on most any trail will confirm that.
57	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
58	* The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. * No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. * Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. * The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. * Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. * Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
59	I have been working on maintaining trails throughout WNC since 1972. I am an equestrian and a volunteer that heads up all trail maintenance groups in Pisgah Forest. I have to admit, I am still in shock that equestrian trails are not represented in your master plan. Horse and mules have a historical place in the development of NC. Yet, based on all I can see, you have no representation for them on your committee and no equestrian trails in your Draft Master Plan. Yes, I am upset and I am sure thousands of trail riders throughout the state will be likewise. Bottomline, PLEASE include equestrian trails and appropriate packing for trail riders in your master plan.
60	see 2
61	Yes. I am Vice President of the North Carolina Horse Council. and I would like to have some of our trail people invited to the table for input into this great opportunity. My office phone is 1-800 217 4076 cell 336 561 1414 email buckmccoll@northstate.net
62	Really want to see more horse trails for riders. It is such a good thing for the whole family to do and it also keeps children out of trouble.
63	You can handle it a couple of ways. Inform bike riders that horse manure is not like dog manure. All it is is chopped up hay, it doesn't stick to tires like dog manure and they are in the out of doors and in the woods, if it bothers them so much, go ride on the streets we can't. Also inform them that most people who choose to ride on bike trails feel their horses are or need to get over a bike coming along. You can post signs telling bikers to yield or that bikes have right of way. It really should not be a big deal. Make loops to cut a ride short but also lots of mileage 6-7 miles is not enough we need training distances of more like 15 to 30 miles.
64	I would ask that you please consider the equestrian world when making plans for the park. Not only the horse people that would enjoy the park but look at all the money they would bring into the area.
65	Equestrian trail access would be a natural and traditional way for the public to access and enjoy the park. I believe local equestrian groups would gladly help provide manpower for initial and ongoing work on development of trails to accommodate multiple user groups. We are fortunate to have several resources in this area who are professionally trained in the design of sustainable equestrian trails and I believe that they would lend their expertise.
66	I'm happy to see a movement for progress in this area!
67	It would be beneficial to have the equestrian groups involved as they help maintain many of the trails in WNC that otherwise would fall into disrepair.
68	* The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. * No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. * Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. * The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. * Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. * Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
69	Yes extend the public comment time, and take into consideration the ideas given by the horse folks that did attend the meetings. I cannot believe there are no horse access nor parking areas in the Draft Master Plan
70	I would like to have another meeting about this and for the time frame to be extended to 45 days and not 2 weeks since the equestrian groups were left out of the original discussions.
71	Thank you for considering equestrians and trail access for horses!!!
72	We, as equestrians, are very responsive to trail needs, repairs, upkeep. We do not pollute the environment. Please include us in your plan.
73	Add trails for equestrians.
74	If you need more help with what equestrians need and types of access you can contact NC Horse Council suegray@nchorsecouncil.com



75	No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan.
76	See #1
77	I doesn't seem equitable that mountain bikers will have trail access and not horse riders.
78	As a member of the Pisgah Trailblazers, I think all state parks should have horse access, but especially any new parks being developed should include horses
79	Many friends and tourists want the cliff trail open that may not have had access to this link to comment. Please keep that in mind.
80	no
81	The master plan is very difficult to review due to the size of the files. The public comment period is very short since none of the equine groups were notified.
82	Please allow biking on all trails
83	there are a lot of places around that i can mountain bike, but my horse trails are shrinking. why-- i spend 5 times as much money on my horses than my bikes. to me that says money that goes into north carolina economy. please represent all that money i am spending.
84	Horseback riders share trails with mountain bikers in other areas of the state. Trail construction issues are the same and you could get more volunteer help for trail construction if you involved the horse people. We are a large group. The current form of the Master Plan is awful to download. Surely someone can put it in compressed file format. Your survey says, "Take a moment..." Sorry folks, it takes a LOT LONGER than a moment.
85	horse riders are important to our state economy and we do not have enough places to ride as it is so we too should be considered...look at the trails at Uwharrie...maintained by local riding clubs...minimal cost to the park...just a place to primitive camp and park for day rides...
86	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails
87	Change the master plan to allow negotiation of climbing access as historic, already developed climbing areas come into park possession. Conservation does not rule out recreation! Sean Cobourn 123 Carbandy Drive Inman, SC 29349
88	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails
89	Trails for horses.
90	When the new proposed Visitor's Center is in place, will the only access to the top of the attraction portion of the Park be by hiking or bus? Or, will they still be able to drive up in their personal vehicle if space permits? There is no mention of continuing the collection of an entrance fee. Continuing to operate portions of the Park as a business would help sustain its upkeep and operation. Is there any area of the State Park that is being considered as a large event venue? Scout and school groups as well as the general public enjoy attending programs and events.
91	Please consider adding equestrian trails to this plan. That would be a terrific place to ride horses; just one more way to get out there and enjoy our state parks and recreational areas!
92	The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails.
93	I would strongly encourage you to reconsider bringing equestrians to the table on this & all the other currently open Master Plans (Lake James, South Mountain, etc) We want to be part of the solution.





94	It was such a wonderful thing a couple of years ago to hear that this treasure of a place would be permanently saved from development and opened to the people of NC. It's sad now to learn that equestrian trail riders - a group that probably loves and uses wilderness areas in our country as much as any other activity group - may be shut out from participation. We would not expect horse access to 100% of the park but surely there is room for us here. Please take the time to learn about the trail riding community and how it can be not just a user of the park but a contributor to its ongoing viability. Thank you for the chance to participate in this survey. Judy Heinrich 412 Green Fields Lane Columbus, NC 28722 828-863-2912
95	Climbers were instrumental in creating this new park, and yet we've been left in the cold in so far as access is concerned. What's worse, Greenways' conclusions as to climber impact appears to be based on incorrect assumptions, all while the plan calls for wholesale destruction to other areas to appease the non-climbing public. This plan is a slap to the face. It is painfully obvious that, beyond public comments, the climbing community was not consulted in the crafting of this plan.
96	•The public notice for the May 2010 public workshop was inadequate: this is a State Park and the public workshop should have been advertised in newspapers state-wide. •No equestrian organizations were contacted or made aware of the public input opportunity and as a result have been under-represented in public input. In contrast, it is clear that mountain bike advocacy groups were made aware of the workshop and public input opportunities and were strongly represented. •Because of the lack of notice to equestrian user groups, the current two week public comment period is too short. It needs to be extended to at least 45 days for people to properly review the Master Plan and make comments. •The current form of the Master Plan is not user-friendly because the files are very large and time-consuming to download. Greater effort should be made to make a compressed version available for download. Effort to download and review the Master Plan requires hours, not a "moment" as suggested by the survey. •Comments from the small number of equestrians that did attend the public workshop were not addressed in any way, and their suggestions for equestrian trails, possible parking areas, etc., have not been addressed. Mountain bike users were well-represented in the public input, and mountain bike trails are part of the Master Plan. •Though there are ecological and topographical constraints on trail construction in this State Park, if there is a location for mountain bike trails to be sustainably constructed, then the same opportunity must exist for equestrian trails. Thank you for your consideration in this matter. Sincerely, Rachel O'Brien
97	hope that the plans will be revised to include horse trails since these are getting harder and harder to find.
98	I am a Volunteer with the Henderson County Mounted Patrol , A member of the Pisgah Trail Blazers, and a member of the Back Country Horseman of America. I have spent hundreds of hours in service to the State and local county. I assist in keeping trails clear for all trail user groups. I use my own money, (keeping horses is very expensive) and time in this service. Equestrians are a very large group and it would be a shame to not include us. I hope that I can continue to ride in the Beautiful state of North Carolina. Thank you
99	If you continue with these plan as is without giving the people what they want, I'll never visit this park again. How many people would it take to change your mind? A million? A thousand? Think of the thousands of people that have hiked these trails. When they come back years later and find out their beloved trails are closed, and are disappointed, are you going to be happy with yourselves then? You know there's lots of people out there that don't know this is happening. By the time they find out, it'll be too late. I can see adding to this park, but you have to save it for history sake. Don't take away.....
100	The Hickory Nut Gorge State Park has the potential to be a world class rock climbing destination rivaling Yosemite National Park. The park should embrace the rich rock climbing history of the area and use it as an attraction for all user groups. It would be fantastic if people could watch climbers in action from on top Chimney Rock! Also, it is a waste of money to upgrade the elevator equipment in the shaft. The elevator never should have been constructed and should be left in its condition as a testimony to poor recreation and conservation practices.
101	Yes. Ummm... Mountain Biking please. :-)
102	I urge you to consider that the climbing communities recreation is not starting from scratch. Just as you carefully considered recreation opportunities that have been in place for 100 years at Chimney Rock, consider the established climbing areas that have been used for over 25 years throughout the gorge. While certainly not as popular or well documented, this has been our community for many years. I urge you to consider continueing to allow climbing in all areas of the gorge, not just the over used south face of Rumbling Bald.
103	If climbers could climb on all the rock in the Lake lure area, it would be in the top 10 climbing destinations in the country. Realizing that that is unlikely to happen, I only suggest opening as many cliffs as possible after considering other user groups and the environment in the vicinity.
104	Lowering the price while there are intermittent closures, is a great motivator to have visitors during renovations, and it is appreciated that you did that.
105	Please work with the Carolina Climber's Coalition and the Access Fund in a revision to this plan that will LESSEN the impact of climbing on the environment. Your plan INCREASES the impact by trying to squeeze high demand into a smaller area.
106	Chimney Rock State Park will be an amazing addition to western NC and the entire east coast. Hickory nut Gorge is the most diverse and rugged gorge around. By allowing biker, climbers, and hikers more access, the more the park will be used by people from all over. Hiking will attract the minority vs. biking and climbing. Trails that dont get used, get overgrown and taken by the jungle, which is why allowing biking and climbing in more areas would be a benefit. Climbers and biker could develop there own trails. With outdoor adventure comes a thriving local economy based in outdoor pursuits centered around the environment. This park could be good climbing and biking or world class with more access. Thanks for the effort and opportunity in transforming this vacation oriented, economyless valley to hopefully a useable resource for all.
107	
108	Climbers were instrumental in getting the area protected and not developed. I think you should put more emphasis on what that group has to say, as we have been silently protecting it ourselves for years before the park committed to buying the Hickory Nut Gorge area.
109	Would this park expansion have been possible without the fundraising help from the Carolina Climbers Coalition? Does the NC State Park Planners think that climbers will be as quick to help out (with volunteering as well as donating) next time the State Parks need something?
110	Work with the access fund and CCC to rethink your current proposal for climbing at Lake Lure.
111	While climbers may not be your largest user group by type. There are currently and hopefully will continue to be your most frequent, invloved and active user group. Allowing them access to the extensive resources of Chimney Rock State Park would be a great building block for future generations of users and an affirmation of the world class status of the rock formations which occur there.
112	As a recreational climber of 15+ years, I have witnessed that the majority of rock climbers treat the parks in which they climb with the utmost respect. While they are often seen as counter-culture, they love the outdoors, the environment and the opportunities to experience it from a perspective that most do not. The climbing community is very much self-regulating in that the strongest and loudest voices are those that promote low-impact and "Leave No Trace" behaviors. With strong and exemplary leadership within the climbing community leading further development efforts at Chimney Rock SP, the park has the opportunity to present a much more broad and robust array of activities for those who would think to visit this great state.
113	No, thank you for the opportunity to present the master plan in a forum that easily permits public comment.
114	If mountain bike trails become a priority that they are not mixed use with horses or atvs.
115	Please consider more mountain biking trails in the master plan. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input and for working to increase the park's overall footprint.





116	Access to more climbing areas! I understand the need to make sure delicate areas (like Eagle Rock) are not used for climbing. If this was noted or advertised (CCC, new guidebooks, etc), most or all climbers would understand and follow the guide lines set.
117	there are many folks in lake lure who would gladly volunteer to help push the mountain bike trails forward in the next few years (not have to wait for public funding etc)...lets make that happen.
118	I think I have gone on enough
119	Please place great emphasis on the development of additional recreational opportunities in the Park. I have been working with a great group of dedicated mountain bikers to build a trail at the base of Hanging Rock State Park. I'm sure this group would be willing to donate some of it's time and skill to build a world class trail at Chimney Rock. Also, please consider adding a primitive camping area near the mountain biking trail access similar to the campsites near the Tsalil trail system. And most of all THANK-YOU for working to develop a world class park devoted to wildlife preservation and recreation.
120	No
121	Kudos to everyone involved in preserving another magnificent North Carolina resource!
122	The plan notes that desired climbing areas are in areas with sensitive ecosystems. The plan states that areas to which climbers currently have access are in need of trail maintenance and that there is a priority for protecting natural heritage areas. I agree with all of these points. I would also argue that by communicating and collaborating with the CCC, it is likely that these needs might be met as climbers are allowed access to the desired areas. The climbing community both values sustainable use of natural resources and their access to those resources. The climbing community has a demonstrated history of banding together to self-police against "leaving a trace" and for the maintenance of climbing areas, including trail maintenance. The CCC has also worked with area officials to protect endangered species, as exemplified by supporting the closing of portions of Looking Glass to climbers because of peregrine nesting. I, a North Carolina resident, a rock climber, and a member of the CCC, ask that this plan be altered to allow additional climbing access and to include a plan for communication and collaboration between park officials and the CCC to ensure that both the natural heritage of the park be preserved and access for climbers be expanded and maintained.
123	Please consider allotting more land access and an aggressive mountain biking plan.
124	I don't believe that those formulating this plan are very familiar with the sport of climbing, and I don't see where climbers or climber groups were contacted to discuss this plan. It is unfortunate that the opinion and expertise of the people whom the plan affects are not sought out to add to the discussion. I see reference to historic and natural aspects of the rock and land that need to be preserved. There are many ways to 'climb clean' and create no more of an impact than hikers. In fact, the southeastern United States holds some of the most stringent climbing ethics. Local climbers here more than anywhere else strive to create as little an impact as possible.
125	This is a unique and valuable landscape resource that can be utilized as a conservation area, while providing low impact access to climbing opportunities.
126	Please do not ignore the climbers. We are a large and respectful group of passionate land users. Consider the impacts of such an extreme concentration of use on a small area. Rehabilitation is already needed at Rumbling Bald, and with no other options for climbing access, this will never happen, and we will see the further progression of invasive species throughout the park. Please consider not marginalizing the recreational users.
127	Please contact any equestrian group in regards to this park, the NC horse council, the Pisgah Trailblazers, the Back Country Horsemen of NC, they will all be very supportive of equestrian trails in the area & they will be your biggest volunteer base to help keep the trails in good shape.
128	No, but thank you for taking comments!
129	Myself and many of my friends are excited about the new stewardship plans for the parts and are glad to have a part in taking care of our state!
130	Thanks for the effort to bring this proposal to the attention of the public. Please engage the SEC or CCC to learn more about ways that we can help you form and execute your plan!
131	You need to actively engage the climbing community. We have just as much of a right to use the land for recreation as any hiker or mountain biker. It's so obvious that the stated reasons in the plan for limiting access to the specific areas are throwaway bullshit excuses that it is barely worth responding to. Rock climbing is significantly less damaging to the "delicate ecosystem" than horse riding, mountain biking, camping or hiking. I'm embarrassed for you.
132	More climbing access
133	Given that the Cliff Trail will be closed, and the Skyline Trail drastically altered, I would simply urge that every reasonable effort be made to assure that the new vantage points provided on the upper trail afford visitors as much as possible the viewing experience that was available on the former trails. There are few experiences in eastern North America to equal that of looking down over the cliffs to the floor of the gorge! Let's retain as much of that experience as possible.
134	Re-open the trails that people fought to save. They didn't want NCSP to buy the park to close what they love the most!
135	Thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion and preferences for the chimney rock plan. No matter the outcome, I'm excited about the conservation of this amazing place and glad that the future of chimney rock is secure.
136	It seems like climbers are viewed as pests in the eyes of the developers. Climbers are not pests. They often have trail days and maintain their climbing areas. The nature of most of the climbing in the gorge (being mostly traditional climbs as opposed to sport or top rope climbs) means it will not be a major destination for beginners, but it would be a great place for people familiar with climbing. This is good for two reasons: 1. they will be gentle on the environment by practicing leave no trace (beginners are not always aware of the proper procedures) and 2. they will be less at risk for injury or accidents. <del>Keeping parts of the gorge closed for climbing only harbor hostility in the climbing community. This is a state park, it is public land, we should be allowed to use it.</del>
137	Climbing is a serious enough draw to warrant some detailed explanation in this draft. All I see are vagueries meant to stifle the dialogue regarding cliff access. Is the CCC not considered a conservation steward in the area? Will hikers be banned when one hooligan shows up with a spray can? What about the millions of dollars and habitat disruption that will accompany your development plans? There are still a lot of problems that need addressing here.
138	MORE CLIMBING!
139	We as a climbing community feel that we had a hand in getting people interested in creating the park, and that now we are getting the short end of the stick. To ban climbing from the entire northside; Eagle Rock, Shumont, Ghost Town, and World's Edge crags are off limits in the new plan; is to restrict climbing in areas where it has already existed. The impact of climbing in these areas can be restricted to the same impact as hiking if the use of camouflaged bolts is mandated, and the trails are properly planned and maintained (we know that the trails at Rumbling Bald were not planned to the optimum standards and could use a new plan and trail day to fix them). We hope you revise your plan for the area.
140	Open more climbing please!



141	As a resident of Fairview, I want to see as many recreational activities available in my neighboring community of Chimney Rock for both my family and my self. It is a resource that we use regularly. Chimney Rock has the potential to be a hot spot of outdoor recreation for the Eastern US
142	Please, we implore you to look to the future of climbing access in this park. This is the most beautiful Park in the NC Park system hands down and to deny one user group from experiencing it in the way that they want to is to deny them all. Climbers respect the environment perhaps better than any other user group. Maybe its because our connection with the resources is more powerful because our very being, physical and emotional, depends on it. Our numbers are small but growing and dispersing the impact is the only sustainable way to preserve and protect the resource.
143	Keep in mind, before we rock climbers can climb rock, we have to hike to get there: we are hikers as well. With so much potential climbing, we will stay in the park for a few days: we are campers as well. Please bear in mind the opinions "rock climbing" as being detrimental to the rock are indeed just opinions. 30 years ago the only techniques available to climb safely involved damage to the rocks and most current opinions are still based on this fact. However, modern climbing gear/techniques have solved this problem. Current gear/techniques permit safe (even safer than the old methods) climbing with only marginal impact to the rock. Please verify potential impact concerns by doing the research and not following ancient/misguided/uneducated opinions.
144	Allow more climbing areas to open, spread us out!!
145	Rock climbers as a whole are a very conscious and conscientious community. We often pack out trash we find at the crag. We police each other to ensure respectful use. We work to maintain public holdings of beautiful land. Please don't restrict our access.
146	yes, but i'll save them for 'letters to the editor' and my contacts with elected officials.
147	Thank you for considering my input!
148	I would be disappointed if climbing access was restricted to key areas such as the northside, Eagle Rock, Shumont, Ghost Town, Chimney Rock and World's Edge crags.
149	Intensive development is my least preferred option. Especially motorized vehicle impact and high-impact camping (RV sites, for example) should be kept to a minimum. Also, existing trails (railings, etc.) need repair. Little has been done in the park's initial years to address this, and additional trails are currently closed... at this point, less than 1/2 of the park's previous trail mileage is open to the public. My visit there a few weeks ago (I took 10 friends who were there for the first time) was somewhat underwhelming. This could have been addressed long ago for a moderate amount of money. Studies are good -- maintenance and proper staffing on the ground are essential.
150	See previous
151	Please work with the CCC on a plan to allow for an expansion of climbing opportunities. Properly managed access trails, a permit system, and proper oversight can limit the impact of climbing far greater than that of unregulated hiking.
152	I must note that I have been very surprised by the tone of the draft master plan when considering options for climbing. It is not in keeping with the recognition across the North Carolina outdoor community that climbing is a key activity for NC citizens interested in enjoying their wonderful natural resources and parks system. The key to successful multi use of these facilities is a management plan that is created in partnership with the state's climbing organizations such as the Carolina Climbers Coalition with consulting support from national organizations such as the Access Fund and the American Alpine Club.
153	Please reopen the cliffline and skyline trails at Chimney Rock as soon as possible. These trails are near and dear to many a person who has ever had the opportunity to hike them.
154	Climbers are one of the largest user groups in the Southeast for outdoor recreation. We bring hundreds of thousands if not millions of dollars in tourism revenue to Lake Lure and other towns in Western North Carolina. Blindly shutting us out as a user group based on faulty reasoning will not lessen impact at Chimney Rock State Park, but will significantly decrease local tourism revenue.
155	PLEASE do something about parking in the rumbling bald area soon! The current parking is extremely insufficient as I am sure you know! Thank you for the time and effort!
156	
157	State money should not go towards renovating a local business (Chimney Rock Cafe). A suitable site for a visitors center already exists at the Lake Lure visitors center. No additional development of the Meadows is required. Currently, most of the frequent users to Chimney Rock are recreational based. It only makes sense that most of the planning be geared towards recreational purposes, which includes expanding the climbing access. By keeping the status quo in regards to climbing the park will not attract more climbers thus losing out on a large part of the current tourism basis, especially in the colder months. Additionally, the development plan as is will not create a world class climbing destination, which this area easily has the potential to be.
158	I'd love to help in any way possible to get more climbing areas open.
159	Recreational opportunities should be the focus of Chimney Rock State Park as without these activities (rock climbing, hiking, mtn biking, and fishing) future generations will have little to no value for nature as they will not have any outdoor activities to enjoy.

## INPUT FROM ROCK CLIMBING COMMUNITY

In addition to the responses from the online comment form, a formal letter was prepared by the Carolina Climbers Coalition and the Access Fund in response to the draft master plan. Rock climbing supporters submitted the following letter advocating for additional rock climbing access within Chimney Rock State Park. Over 400 responses were received by project consultants and the N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation.

December 13, 2010  
[Project Consultant]

Dear [Project Consultant],

I regularly climb in the Hickory Nut Gorge of North Carolina and write today to offer comments on the Draft Master Plan for Chimney Rock State Park (CRSP), a destination for climbers in the Southeast and Nationwide, seeking all forms of climbing from traditional and sport climbing to bouldering and ice climbing.

(Section 1) The plan as currently drafted fails to recognize the important role of the climbing community and Carolina Climbers Coalition (CCC) in development and conservation of CRSP. Rock climbing should be mentioned in the Site Context as it has been a viable activity in the area for over 30 years. Since initial legislation in 2005, the CCC and climbers have been a leading proponent for public land conservation in Hickory Nut Gorge, including CCC's most recent purchase of the West Side Boulders for future transfer to CRSP. This plan needs to include the CCC and the Access Fund as important cooperative resources.

(Section 10-24) We appreciate and support recommendations for improvements to parking and trail access at Rumbling Bald Mountain. Due to the site's lack of historical land management and growth in popularity, impacts have been concentrated at Rumbling Bald. As a recreational user, I want to see high traffic areas restored through cooperative partnering of climbers and CRSP. The south side of Rumbling Bald represents a unique case where impacts cannot automatically be attributed to climbing; many other climbing areas in the state park system see very minimal impact from climbing.

(Section Ex-11) The draft plan does not acknowledge historic climbing areas beyond the limited selection of published guidebooks. Specifically, I strongly advise the master plan to recognize climbing at the south face of Round Top Mountain (Ghost Town) and the north side of Rumbling Bald. Concentrating climbers on the south side of Rumbling Bald will only increase impacts to a single area of high conservation value. Both Ghost Town and the north side of Rumbling Bald have a 20+ year climbing history.

(Section Ex-11) We appreciate the draft master plan's encouragement of a climbing management plan to evaluate future climbing areas. However, the plan should outline greater detail and collaboration to ensure that recreation and natural resource protection are balanced. Additionally, a process should build on the success of the Natural Heritage and Natural Resources programs to include site-specific studies of the type of climbing and any documented impacts in other Hickory Nut Gorge areas containing significant climbing resources. With appropriate management and study, recreation and natural resource protection are not mutually exclusive. Specific examples include World's Edge (Cane Creek), Chimney Rock Attraction, Blue Rock, Cloven Cliffs, Weed Patch Mountain, and Eagle Rock. Whether currently owned by Chimney Rock State Park or a potential future acquisition of private land, the master plan needs to acknowledge that these areas will be evaluated in a timely manner. This process will ensure that such sought-after resources become available to the public and relieve concentrated impacts to the south face of Rumbling Bald.

North Carolina State Parks have had a very successful history of working with climbers to provide a balanced management approach to conservation and public recreation. In return, climbers have been supportive of State Park conservation objectives and management throughout the years. I urge you to incorporate our comments and build a framework for long-lasting collaboration with the climbing community.

Sincerely,

[Climbing Supporter]



# SUSTAINABLE DESIGN IN STATE PARK MASTER PLANNING

## OVERVIEW

The N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Green Building Policy, drafted by the N.C. Department of Environment and Natural Resources Sustainability Team and signed by former Secretary Bill Ross, directs the department and its divisions "to take real and permanent steps to integrate sustainable and green building practices for projects in capital construction, facility renovations, facility leasing, land development, landscaping and facility purchases." All components of the master plan have been evaluated and designed based on principles of sustainable design/green design with reference to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) design criteria. LEED® is a rating system for green design first developed in 1999 by the U.S. Green Building Council. According to the U.S. Green Building Council, "Green design not only makes a positive impact on public health and the environment, it also reduces operating costs, enhances building and organizational marketability, potentially increases occupant productivity, and helps create a sustainable community" (*U.S. Green Building Council, 2005*).

Though a project does not have to be rated through the LEED® system to be considered 'green,' the system provides a well-defined baseline from which to begin conversations in design regarding how to develop any new construction project or major renovation in a manner that will be sustainable. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation staff directive states, "The Division is to pursue LEED® certification through the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED® Green Building Rating System for all new, or significantly renovated, buildings having 5,000 square feet or more. For buildings less than 5,000 square feet, project team members are to be familiar with the use of LEED® as a tool to help guide the project."

Much of the LEED® system is focused on structures and will be addressed more thoroughly at later design and development phases for buildings. LEED® accreditation is based on six areas of sustainability. These include sustainable site, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, indoor environmental quality, and innovation and design process. Further description of these areas in the context of Chimney Rock State Park follows.

## SUSTAINABLE SITE

For this master plan, specific attention has been focused on selection of sustainable sites for future development. Site selection for buildings and parking areas has been based on areas with the following qualities:

- Slopes less than 10 percent
- Areas more than 50 feet from a water body (construction should not take place within a 100 feet buffer from perennial streams whenever practicable)
- Areas more than 100 feet from a wetland as defined by the National Wetlands Inventory\*
- Land that is specifically identified as habitat for any species on Federal or State threatened or endangered lists.

Other focus areas for sustainable sites include using low impact design strategies:

- Reduce imperviousness
- Conserve natural resources and ecosystems
- Maintain natural drainage courses
- Reduce use of pipes for stormwater management
- Minimize clearing and grading
- Minimize soil erosion, waterway sedimentation, and airborne particulate/dust generation during construction
- Disperse stormwater management facilities/structures uniformly across a site
- Mimic natural systems for stormwater quality control
- Minimize heat island effects
- Minimize light pollution.

During the design and construction phases of any project in the park, special attention will be focused on protecting the site from sedimentation, soil erosion, as well as airborne particulate/dust generation during the construction process. Use of best available technology for sedimentation and erosion control is critical.

Devices and structures used for sedimentation and erosion control will be maintained in good working condition at all times during construction.

Appropriate design for stormwater is important in maintaining a sustainable site. Not only should stormwater design meet state and local codes, it should go beyond these regulations to ensure stormwater quality as the water re-enters the surface and subsurface water cycles. Water quantity controls will minimize the potential for downstream flooding and erosion from site development in the future. Water quality controls, performed by structures such as bioretention areas, will help to maximize sequestration of pollutants to the site of creation as well as protecting areas downstream from these pollutants. All stormwater should flow through a vegetated upland prior to entering a stream or wetland (*N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, 2002*).

During construction, all equipment will be kept out of streams as much as practicable. Also, utility lines and infrastructure will be installed outside of stream buffers.

The heat island effect is defined by the U.S. Green Building Council as “thermal gradient differences between developed and undeveloped areas” (*U.S. Green Building Council, 2005*). This effect can have negative impact on microclimates as well as human, animal, and plant habitats. Heat islands are most often caused by large areas of unshaded pavement and large roof areas. The master plan begins to address this issue through identification of overflow parking areas that use pervious and plantable materials.

Additional attention can be focused on this issue in design and construction phases of a development project through, for example, provision of ample shade in parking areas, use of high reflectance materials for paving (selected with attention to potential glare issues for those with visual disabilities), minimization of structure footprints and therefore roof areas, use of roofing materials with a high reflectance, and/or use of a vegetated roof.





## WATER EFFICIENCY

Efficient use of water will be considered in every phase of a project for both the site and the buildings. Use of innovative wastewater technologies when possible and water use reduction, through the use of low-flow toilets, showers and other means, also are considered sustainable design practices. Use of cisterns to harvest rainwater from roof structures can provide water for uses including, but not limited to, landscape irrigation and toilet flushing. During the design phase of any project at the park, sustainable design principles will dictate design of water efficient landscaping, with an ideal focus toward landscaping requiring no potable water use and no irrigation beyond plant establishment.

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Green building practices cost less to operate and maintain. They also provide an opportunity to use natural resources efficiently and responsibly and to reduce the site and building's overall impact on the environment.

Buildings should be optimized for energy-efficiency, including siting buildings with an east-west axis, where practicable, to optimize for passive solar design and the use of broad roof overhangs to block mid-day summer sun.

Use of on-site renewable energy sources where possible, including opportunities for solar energy, hydropower, and/or wind power, will make the development more self-sufficient and reduce economic and environmental impacts from fossil fuel use. Energy-efficient heating and cooling systems, such as geothermal/ground source wells, use the constant earth temperature to heat and cool the workplace.

The visitor center, park administration offices, day use area structures, and any other park buildings will be designed for energy efficiency. Solar energy or other renewable energy options both for heating water and providing electricity will be explored whenever possible.

Another means of ensuring energy-efficiency as defined by LEED® includes increasing energy performance and commissioning of buildings to ensure that systems are designed and perform in an energy-efficient manner.

## MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Sustainable design and construction ensures waste reduction through the design of the building and the construction process. When waste is produced, recycling should be a priority. Reuse of existing building material also should be prioritized.

Design for use of new building materials in the construction process should focus on those materials utilizing recycled content. When recycled content is not possible, products made from rapidly renewable products are desirable and resource friendly. Wood certified using the Forest Stewardship Council's Principles and Criteria will promote sustainable forestry practices.

Ideally, materials will be sourced from producers and manufacturers in the surrounding region. A focus on indigenous materials can replicate a 'local vernacular' as well as minimize environmental impacts from transportation and add to local economic prosperity.

## INDOOR ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

A focus on indoor air quality enhances the health and experience of building occupants. Many aspects of sustainable indoor air quality performance can be addressed by a qualified designer, such as adequate ventilation and use of low-emitting material selection (e.g. paints, sealants, adhesives, etc.).

Indoor environmental quality also addresses issues related to lighting controls, thermal comfort, daylighting, and views.

## INNOVATION AND DESIGN PROCESS

Sustainable design practitioners can be precedent setters for new, innovative practices in design and construction of sites and buildings. The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation can set guidelines for all new construction at Chimney Rock State Park based on successes displayed and monitored in other projects. The visitor center building proposed in this master plan will provide opportunities for educating the general public and other designers about the ecological, cultural, and economic benefits of green design and construction.

## TECHNOLOGIES OF PARTICULAR INTEREST

The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation staff directive on sustainable and green building practices indicates a particular interest in sustainable and green building technologies that address the following:

- Ecological site design; on-site erosion control, water purification/pollution reduction, and storm-water management.
- Transportation; promoting bicycle, pedestrian, and transit use where possible.
- Waste reduction; building reuse, job site recycling, and efficient use of materials.
- On-site management of sewage and organic wastes, such as graywater systems and biological wastewater treatment. It is recommended that when the existing wastewater treatment facility at the park reaches the end of its useful life, that a more innovative system, potentially using small constructed wetland systems be considered. This could provide a significant addition to the environmental education program as well.
- Energy efficiency; efficient thermal envelopes, efficient space and water heating, lighting, controls and monitoring, and appliances.
- Renewable energy; photovoltaics, geothermal pumps, wind turbines.
- Water efficiency, both domestic and irrigation, including rainwater harvesting for irrigation and toilet flushing. Consider waterless urinals in all applications.
- Materials and resources; durable building envelopes and long-lived materials or assemblies, recycled-content materials, safer, less toxic materials, such as alternatives to CCA-treated wood, innovative application of natural materials (characterized by low embodied energy, local availability, good performance, biodegradable, safe, esthetic) such as straw, earth, and other composites.
- Indoor environmental quality; pollution reduction, worker and occupant safety, air cleaning, humidity control, and thermal comfort.
- Operations and maintenance; monitoring energy, water, waste, air quality, and transportation use along with resource-efficient operation practices.

*\* Further design and development will require evaluation for wetlands based on 40 CFR Parts 230-233 and Part 22.*



# NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES

## ARTICLE 2C. STATE PARKS ACT

### § 113-44.7. Short title.

This Article shall be known as the State Parks Act. (1987, c. 243.)

### § 113-44.8. Declaration of policy and purpose.

(a) The State of North Carolina offers unique archaeologic, geologic, biological, scenic, and recreational resources. These resources are part of the heritage of the people of this State. The heritage of a people should be preserved and managed by those people for their use and for the use of their visitors and descendants.

(b) The General Assembly finds it appropriate to establish the State Parks System. This system shall consist of parks which include representative examples of the resources sought to be preserved by this Article, together with such surrounding lands as may be appropriate. Park lands are to be used by the people of this State and their visitors in order to promote understanding of and pride in the natural heritage of this State.

(c) The tax dollars of the people of the State should be expended in an efficient and effective manner for the purpose of assuring that the State Parks System is adequate to accomplish the goals as defined in this Article.

(d) The purpose of this Article is to establish methods and principles for the planned acquisition, development, and operation of State parks.  
(1987, c. 243.)

### § 113-44.9. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) "Department" means the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

(2) "Park" means any tract of land or body of water comprising part of the State Parks System under this Article, including existing State parks, State natural areas, State recreation areas, State trails, State rivers, and State lakes.

(3) "Plan" means State Parks System Plan.

(4) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources.

(5) "State Parks System" or "system" mean all those lands and waters which comprise the parks system of the State as established under this Article.

(1987, c. 243, s. 1; 1989, c. 727, s. 218(50); 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1004, s. 19(b); 1997-443, s. 11A.119(a).)

#### **§ 113-44.10. Powers of the Secretary.**

The Secretary shall implement the provisions of this Article and shall be responsible for the administration of the State Parks System.

(1987, c. 243.)

#### **§ 113-44.11. Preparation of a System Plan.**

(a) The Secretary shall prepare and adopt a State Parks System Plan by December 31, 1988. The Plan, at a minimum, shall:

(1) Outline a method whereby the mission and purposes of the State Parks System as defined in G.S. 113-44.8 can be achieved in a reasonable, timely, and cost-effective manner;

(2) Evaluate existing parks against these standards to determine their statewide significance;

(3) Identify duplications and deficiencies in the current State Parks System and make recommendations for correction;

(4) Describe the resources of the existing State Parks System and their current uses, identify conflicts created by those uses, and propose solutions to them; and

(5) Describe anticipated trends in usage of the State Parks System, detail what impacts these trends may have on the State Parks System, and recommend means and methods to accommodate those trends successfully.

(b) The Plan shall be developed with full public participation, including a series of public meetings held on adequate notice under rules which shall be adopted by the Secretary. The purpose of the public meetings and other public participation shall be to obtain from the public:

(1) Views and information on the needs of the public for recreational resources in the State Parks System;

(2) Views and information on the manner in which these needs should be addressed;

(3) Review of the draft plan prepared by the Secretary before he adopts the Plan.

(c) The Secretary shall revise the Plan at intervals not exceeding five years. Revisions to the Plan shall be made consistent with and under the rules providing public participation in adoption of the Plan.

(1987, c. 243.)

#### **§ 113-44.12. Classification of parks resources.**

After adopting the Plan, the Secretary shall identify and classify the major resources of each of the parks in the State Parks System, in order to establish the major purpose or purposes of each of the parks, consistent with the Plan and the purposes of this Article.

(1987, c. 243.)



### **§ 113-44.13. General management plans.**

Every park classified pursuant to G.S. 113-44.12 shall have a general management plan. The plan shall include a statement of purpose for the park based upon its relationship to the System Plan and its classification. An analysis of the major resources and facilities on hand to achieve those purposes shall be completed along with a statement of management direction. The general management plan shall be revised as necessary to comply with the System Plan and to achieve the purposes of this Article.

(1987, c. 243.)

### **§ 113-44.14. Additions to and deletions from the State Parks System.**

(a) If, in the course of implementing G.S. 113-44.12 the Secretary determines that the major purposes of a park are not consistent with the purposes of this Article and the Plan, the Secretary may propose to the General Assembly the deletion of that park from the State Parks System. On a majority vote of each house of the General Assembly, the General Assembly may remove the park from the State Parks System. No other agency or governmental body of the State shall have the power to remove a park or any part from the State Parks System.

(b) New parks shall be added to the State Parks System by the Department after authorization by the General Assembly. Each additional park shall be authorized only by an act of the General Assembly. Additions shall be consistent with and shall address the needs of the State Parks System as described in the Plan. All additions shall be accompanied by adequate authorization and appropriations for land acquisition, development, and operations.

(1987, c. 243.)

### **§ 113-44.15. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund.**

(a) There is established a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund in the State Treasurer's Office. The Trust Fund shall be a nonreverting special revenue fund consisting of gifts and grants to the Trust Fund, monies credited to the Trust Fund pursuant to G.S. 105-228.30(b), and other monies appropriated to the Trust Fund by the General Assembly.

(b) Funds in the Trust Fund are annually appropriated to the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority and, unless otherwise specified by the General Assembly or the terms or conditions of a gift or grant, shall be allocated and used as follows:

(1) Sixty-five percent (65%) for the State Parks System for capital projects, repairs and renovations of park facilities, and land acquisition.

(2) Thirty percent (30%) to provide matching funds to local governmental units on a dollar-for-dollar basis for local park and recreation purposes. These funds shall be allocated by the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority based on criteria patterned after the Open Project Selection Process established for the Land and Water Conservation Fund administered by the National Park Service of the United States Department of the Interior.

(3) Five percent (5%) for the Coastal and Estuarine Water Beach Access Program. Of the funds appropriated to the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority from the Trust Fund each year, no more than three percent (3%) may be used by the Department for operating expenses associated with managing capital improvements projects, acquiring land, and administration of local grants programs.



(c) The North Carolina Parks and Recreation Authority shall report on an annual basis to the Joint Legislative Commission on Governmental Operations, the appropriations committees of the House of Representatives and the Senate, and the Fiscal Research Division on allocations from the Trust Fund.

(1993 (Reg. Sess., 1994), c. 772, s. 1; 1995, c. 456, s. 2; 1995 (Reg. Sess., 1996), c. 646, s. 20.)

## ARTICLE 9A. NATURE PRESERVES ACT

### § 113A-164.1. Short title.

This Article shall be known as the Nature Preserves Act.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

### § 113A-164.2. Declaration of policy and purpose.

(a) The continued population growth and land development in North Carolina have made it necessary and desirable that areas of natural significance be identified and preserved before they are destroyed. These natural areas are irreplaceable as laboratories for scientific research, as reservoirs of natural materials for uses that may not now be known, as habitats for plant and animal species and biotic communities, as living museums where people may observe natural biotic and environmental systems and the interdependence of all forms of life, and as reminders of the vital dependence of the health of the human community on the health of the other natural communities.

(b) It is important to the people of North Carolina that they retain the opportunity to maintain contact with these natural communities and environmental systems of the earth and to benefit from the scientific, aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual values they possess. The purpose of this Article is to establish and maintain a State Registry of Natural Heritage Areas and to prescribe methods by which nature preserves may be dedicated for the benefit of present and future citizens of the State.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

### § 113A-164.3. Definitions.

As used in this Article, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) "Articles of dedication" means the writing by which any estate, interest, or right in a natural area is formally dedicated as a nature preserve as authorized in G.S. 113A-164.6.

(2) "Dedicate" means to transfer to the State an estate, interest, or right in a natural area in any manner authorized in G.S. 113A-164.6.

(3) "Natural area" means an area of land, water, or both land and water, whether publicly or privately owned, that (i) retains or has reestablished its natural character, (ii) provides habitat for rare or endangered species of plants or animals, (iii) or has biotic, geological, scenic, or palcontological features of scientific or educational value.

(4) "Nature preserve" means a natural area that has been dedicated pursuant to G.S. 113A-164.6.



(5) "Owner" means any individual, corporation, partnership, trust, or association, and all governmental units except the State, its departments, agencies or institutions.

(6) "Registration" means an agreement between the Secretary and the owner of a natural area to protect and manage the natural area for its specified natural heritage resource values.

(7) "Secretary" means the Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1; 1989, c. 727, s. 218 (68); 1989 (Reg. Sess., 1990), c. 1004, s. 19 (b); 1997-443, s. 11A.119 (a).)

#### **§ 113A-164.4. Powers and duties of the Secretary.**

The Secretary shall:

(1) Establish by rule the criteria for selection, registration, and dedication of natural areas and nature preserves.

(2) Cooperate or contract with any federal, State, or local government agency, private conservation organization, or person in carrying out the purposes of this Article.

(3) Maintain a Natural Heritage Program to provide assistance in the selection and nomination for registration or dedication of natural areas. The Program shall include classification of natural heritage resources, an inventory of their locations, and a data bank for that information. The Program shall cooperate with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in the selection and nomination of areas that contain habitats for endangered and rare plant species, and shall cooperate with the Wildlife Resources Commission in the selection and nomination of areas that contain habitats for endangered and rare animal species. Information from the natural heritage data bank may be made available to public agencies and private persons for environmental assessment and land management purposes. Use of the inventory data for any purpose inconsistent with the Natural Heritage Program may not be authorized. The Program shall include other functions as may be assigned for registration, dedication, and protection of natural areas and nature preserves.

(4) Prepare a Natural Heritage Plan that shall govern the Natural Heritage Program in the creation of a system of registered and dedicated natural areas.

(5) Publish and disseminate information pertaining to natural areas and nature preserves within the State.

(6) Appoint advisory committees composed of representatives of federal, State, and local governmental agencies, scientific and academic institutions, conservation organizations, and private business, to advise him on the identification, selection, registration, dedication, and protection of natural areas and nature preserves.

(7) Submit to the Governor and the General Assembly a biennial report on or before February 15, 1987, and on or before February 15 of subsequent odd-numbered years describing the activities of the past biennium and plans for the coming biennium, and detailing specific recommendations for action that the Secretary deems necessary for the improvement of the Program.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1; 1987, c. 827, s. 152; 1997-261, s. 82.)

#### **§ 113A-164.5. Registration of natural areas.**

(a) The Secretary shall maintain a State Registry of voluntarily protected natural areas to be called the North Carolina Registry of Natural Heritage Areas. Registration of natural areas shall be accomplished through voluntary agreement between the owner of the natural area and the Secretary. State-owned lands may be registered by agreement with the agency to which the land is allocated. Registration agreements may be terminated by either party at any time, and termination removes the area from the Registry.

(b) A natural area shall be registered when an agreement to protect and manage the natural area for its specified natural heritage resource value has been signed by the owner and the Secretary. The owner of a registered natural area shall be given a certificate signifying the inclusion of the area in the Registry.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

#### **§ 113A-164.6. Dedication of nature preserves.**

(a) The State may accept the dedication of nature preserves on lands deemed by the Secretary to qualify as outstanding natural areas. Nature preserves may be dedicated by voluntary act of the owner. The owner of a qualified natural area may transfer fee simple title or other interest in land to the State. Nature preserves may be acquired by gift, grant, or purchase. Dedication of a preserve shall become effective only upon acceptance of the articles of dedication by the State. Articles of dedication shall be recorded in the office of the register of deeds in the county or counties in which the natural area is located.

(b) Articles of dedication may:

(1) Contain restrictions and other provisions relating to management, use, development, transfer, and public access, and may contain any other restrictions and provisions as may be necessary or advisable to further the purposes of this Article;

(2) Define, consistently with the purposes of this Article, the respective rights and duties of the owner and of the State and provide procedures to be followed in case of violation of the restrictions;

(3) Recognize and create reversionary rights, transfers upon conditions or with limitations, and gifts over; and

(4) Vary in provisions from one nature preserve to another in accordance with differences in the characteristics and conditions of the several areas.

(c) Subject to the approval of the Governor and Council of State, the State may enter into amendments of any articles of dedication upon finding that the amendment will not permit an impairment, disturbance, use, or development of the area inconsistent with the purposes of this Article. If the fee simple estate in the nature preserve is not held by the State under this Article, no amendment may be made without the written consent of the owner of the other interests therein.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)



**§ 113A-164.7. Nature preserves held in trust.**

Lands dedicated for nature preserves pursuant to this Article are held in trust by the State for those uses and purposes expressed in this Article for the benefit of the people of North Carolina. These lands shall be managed and protected according to regulations adopted by the Secretary. Lands dedicated as a nature preserve pursuant to G.S. 113A-164.6 may not be used for any purpose inconsistent with the provisions of this Article, or disposed of, by the State without a finding by the Governor and Council of State that the other use or disposition is in the best interest of the State.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

**§ 113A-164.8. Dedication of state-owned lands to nature preserves; procedures.**

Subject to the approval of the Governor and Council of State, state-owned lands may be dedicated as a nature preserve. State-owned lands shall be dedicated by allocation pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 143-341 (4)g. Lands dedicated pursuant to this section may be removed from dedication upon the approval of the Governor and Council of State.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

**§ 113A-164.9. Dedication of preserves by local governmental units.**

All local units of government may dedicate lands as nature preserves by transfer of fee simple title or other interest in land to the State.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

**§ 113A-164.10. Acquisition of land by State.**

All acquisitions or dispositions of an interest in land by the State pursuant to this Article shall be subject to the provisions of Chapter 146 of the General Statutes.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

**§ 113A-164.11. Assessment of land subject to permanent dedication agreement.**

For purposes of taxation, privately owned land subject to a nature preserve dedication agreement shall be assessed on the basis of the true value of the land less any reduction in value caused by the agreement.

(1985, c. 216, s. 1.)

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR DEDICATED NATURE PRESERVES

1. *Definitions:* As used in this allocation, the terms “natural area,” and “nature preserve” have the same meaning as contained in North Carolina General Statutes 113A-164.3.
2. *Dedication:* The Preserves, as described in this Allocation, are hereby dedicated as nature preserves for the purposes provided in the Nature Preserves Act.
3. *Primary Custodian:* The primary Custodian of the Preserves will be the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation.
4. *Primary Classification:* The primary classification and purpose of the Preserves will be conservation, scientific research, passive recreation, and nature education.
5. *Rules/or Management:*
  - A. *Character of Visitor Activity:* The principal activities in the Preserves shall be non-consumptive outdoor recreation and education in designated areas. These activities may be regulated by the Custodian to protect and conserve the natural values of the preserve. Activities and uses unrelated to those listed above are prohibited except as provided in this Dedication or unless necessary to carry out the purposes of the Preserves. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, commercial development, commercial silviculture, agriculture and grazing, gathering of plants or plant products for purposes other than approved research, the removal, disturbance, molestation, or defacement of minerals, archaeological and natural resources, and those activities specifically restricted in this Dedication.
  - B. *Visitors and Visitor Facilities:* The Custodian reserves the right to orient and guide visitors for educational programs, scientific research, and Preserve management. Exhibits, programs and printed materials may be provided by the Custodian. The Custodian may create and maintain nature trails, overlooks, boardwalks, and primitive campsites adequate to promote the permitted use of the Preserves. Guardrails, fences, steps, bridges, and boardwalks may be provided when appropriate. The Custodian reserves the right to erect structures necessary to protect the Preserves from unwanted or excessive visitor traffic and structures to restrict visitor access to sensitive environmental resources. The Custodian may construct and maintain service roads for patrol, fire control, right-of-way maintenance, and other management activities. The Custodian may maintain roads presently existing within the Preserves. Otherwise, the construction of roads will be prohibited.
  - C. *Other Structures and Improvements:* Buildings or facilities other than those defined above shall not be erected by the Custodian within the Preserves.
  - D. *Research and Collecting Permits:* Any person wishing to engage in scientific research or collecting shall first secure written permission from the Custodian.
  - E. *Vehicles:* There will be no horseback riding or bicycling except on trails designated for these purposes and no use of any motorized vehicles except boats. The Custodian may use vehicles as necessary for the management of the Preserves.



F. Excavation: There will be no mining, drilling, removal of topsoil, sand, gravel, rock, minerals, or other material, nor any change in topography or surface hydrology of the Preserves.

G. Water Level Control: The purpose of water level control shall be to maintain the Preserves' natural water regimes. Water levels that have been altered by human activities may be changed, if necessary, to restore the Preserve to its natural condition. In a Preserve with a long history of managed hydrology, water levels may be managed to perpetuate the ecosystems that have evolved around the hydrology. Millponds are an example of situations in which water levels have been historically managed.

H. Bringing in Flora and Fauna: Exotic flora, and no animals except leashed dogs and cats, horses on trails designated for horseback riding, or animals being reintroduced shall be brought into the Preserves. Any reintroduction will be of species native to the natural community and shall be done according to an approved resource management plan.

I. Fire: Use of prescribed burning is permitted as necessary for the biological management of the Preserves. Any prescribed burning must be done according to an approved fire management plan for the park unit in question. Fires are also permitted in conjunction with supervised activities of the Custodian, or in designated areas within primitive campsites.

J. Disturbance of Natural Features: The disturbance of other natural features is prohibited except for control of disease that would damage or reduce the significance of the Preserves, reduction of fire fuel load after severe storm damage, or for purposes of ecological management as stipulated in the Park unit's approved management plan and that which is consistent with the purposes of this Dedication.

K. Control of Populations (natural and exotic): Any control of animal or plant populations, other than fishing, shall be only to correct situations where populations have been significantly altered from natural conditions. The Custodian may, in accordance with an approved resource management plan, apply biological controls, herbicides and pesticides, and other means deemed necessary or appropriate to control or eradicate exotic or native species of plant or animal that are degrading the natural character of the Preserves.

L. Control of Natural Processes: Natural processes will be managed according to the policy of the North Carolina State Parks Natural Resource Management Policy. Generally, natural resources will be managed by allowing natural environments to evolve through natural processes with minimal influence from human activities. Exceptions are enumerated in the Policy Statement.

M. Management Plan: These rules for management constitute a management plan within the meaning of NCAC 115A:12H.Q401 until detailed plans for each park are prepared. The dedicated nature preserves continue to be subject to other applicable regulations within NCAC Title 115A, chapter 12. Where contradictions may arise between this instrument of dedication and other management regulations, the terms of this Dedication shall take precedence.

6. Amendment, Modification, and Termination: Any changes to this Dedication must be made in accordance with the provisions of North Carolina General Statutes 113A-164.8, Which require the approval of the Governor and the Council of State.

7. Permanent Plaque: The Custodian should display a permanent plaque or other appropriate marker at a prominent location in the office of the appropriate park unit.

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# D RESOURCES & REFERENCES

## DIGITAL RESOURCES

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**A Brief Summary of the Geology, Geomorphology, Slope Instability, and Seismicity of the Hickory Nut Gorge Area.** April 30, 2008

Gary T. Green, Daniel Van Dijk, Carter J. Betz, and H. Ken Cordell. **USFS National Survey of Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) for North Carolina and the North Carolina Market Region.** 2002-2007.

Isothermal Planning and Development Commission. **Regional Trails Map for the State Trails Program.** April 2010.

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N.C. Department of Water Quality. <http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/wq>

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. **NC Outdoor Recreation Plan 2009-2013 (SCORP)** <http://www.ncparks.gov/About/plans/scorp/main.php>

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. **Chimney Rock State Park.** <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/chro/main.php>

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. **Environmental Sustainability Initiatives.** December 2009  
<<http://www.p2pays.org/ref/07/06568/2001/nframe.asp?type=AGY&page=AGY-parks.htm>>.

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. **Haw River State Park Master Plan.** Appendices. <http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/hari/main.php>

N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation. **Mount Jefferson GMP. Land Acquisition Objectives Prototype.** August 2010.

N.C. **Geology Map.** <http://www.geology.enr.state.nc.us/usgs/geomap.htm>

N.C. **River Basin Map--** <http://www.eenorthcarolina.org/public/eoaddress/riverbasins/riverbasinmapinteractive.htm>

The Nature Conservancy. **Rumbling Bald Preserve.** <http://www.nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/northcarolina/preserves/art12888.html>

U.S. Forest Service. **Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Camping.** <http://www.fs.fed.us/t-d/pubs/htmlpubs/htm07232816/page12.htm>

## HARD COPY RESOURCES

Chimney Rock Management, LLC **Septic System Description and History – Chimney Rock at Chimney Rock State Park.** August 18, 2009.

Dorrity, Chris. **Rumbling Bald Bouldering Guide,** First Edition, 2007.

Feil, Elizabeth and Clint Calhoun. **Chimney Rock Park Plant Species List.**

Flink, Olka, et al. **Trails for the Twenty-First Century.** Island Press, 2001.

Fogg, George E. **Park, Recreation and Leisure Facilities Site Planning Guidelines.** National Recreation and Park Association, 2005.

Kelley, Thomas. **Climbers Guide to North Carolina,** Third Edition. Earthbound Sports, 1995.

International Mountain Biking Association. **Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack.** 2004.

**Lake Lure Summits Trail Draft Proposal.** March 2009.



Lambert, Yon and Shull, Harrison. **Selected Climbs in North Carolina**, First Edition. The Mountaineers Books, 2002.

N.C. 2007 Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) **Data from Henderson, Rutherford, Buncombe, and Polk Counties.**

N.C. DENR - Division of Water Quality, **Water Quality Planning Section.**

N.C. Department of Administration. **Facilities Condition and Assessment Report**, March 26, 2007.

N.C. Division of Emergency Management 2007.

N.C. Geological Survey. **Tectonic Pseudokarst in Western North Carolina.**

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The Nature Conservancy. **Chimney Rock State Park Management Plan Recommendations.** March 2010.

Padgett, James E. **An Inventory of the Significant Natural Areas of Rutherford County, North Carolina.** June 2006.

USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service North Carolina Center for Geographic Information and Analysis (CGIA) (1996).

## DIGITAL MAPPING RESOURCES

FILE NAME	PRIMARY SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	YEAR
Buncombe 2007 parcels	Buncombe County	Parcel Data	2007
Buncombe LIDAR 2007	NCDOT	LIDAR Data	2007
cb100 poly	NCDOT	NC County Boundaries	2006
chalettrails	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	Trails	2009
CHRO SP	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	Park Outline	2008
CHRO Studylands	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	Park Parcels	2008
CONUS wetland polygons	USFWS	Wetlands	
countyboundary shoreline	NCDOT	NC County Boundaries	
dotroads	NCDOT	NC Roadways	2006
gdc chimneyrock	NC Office of State Planning, NC Geodetic Survey	Park Point	2003
geofaults	NC DEHNR-Division of Land Resources, NC Geological Survey	NC Fault Lines	1998
geol	NC DEHNR-Division of Land Resources, NC Geological Survey	NC Geology	1998
gml	NC Wildlife Resources Commission	NC Game Lands	2008
henderson 2004 parcels	Henderson County	Parcel Data	2004
Henderson LIDAR 2007	NCDOT	LIDAR Data	2007
huncrb	USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service	NC River Basins	1998



hydro24k arc	North Carolina Division of Water Quality	NC Streams/rivers	2006
hydro24k poly	North Carolina Division of Water Quality	NC Lakes	2006
hydromaj poly	NC Center for Geographic Information and Analysis	NC Major Water Bodies	2002
lc96	Earth Satellite Corporation (EarthSat)	Land Cover	1998
lmcos	NC Center for Geographic Information and Analysis	NC Conservation and Open Space Land	2002
lrs_arcs	NCDOT	NC Roadways	2008
FILE NAME	PRIMARY SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	YEAR
ltcp	The Conservation Fund	NC Land Trust Conservation Properties	2008
mapfldhazar flood	North Carolina Division of Emergency Management	NC Flood Plains	2007
municipal boundaries polys	NCDOT	NC Municipal Boundaries	2008
nheo	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	NC Natural Heritage Element Occurences	2008
Polk LIDAR 2007	NCDOT	LIDAR Data	2008
polk 2008 parcels	Polk County	Parcel Data	2008
rutherford 2008 parcels	Rutherford County	Parcel Data	2008
Rutherford LIDAR 2007	NCDOT	LIDAR Data	2007
snha	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	NC Significant Natural Heritage Sites	2008
soil nc 021	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Data	2008
soil nc 089	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Data	2008
soil nc 149	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Data	2009
soil nc 161	U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service	Soil Data	2007
trails	NC DENR, Div. of Parks and Recreation	Trails	
urbanarea	U.S. Census Bureau Geography Division	NC Urban Areas	2002
Orthophotography Data	Primary Source	Description	Year
Buncombe County	Buncombe County	Aerial Data	2007



Henderson County	Henderson County	Aerial Data	2007
Rutherford County	Rutherford County	Aerial Data	2005
Polk County	USGS	Aerial Data	
Threatened Forest Resources	Primary Source	Description	Year
Buncombe County forth_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Threatened Forest Levels	2009
Henderson County forth_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Threatened Forest Levels	2009
FILE NAME	PRIMARY SOURCE	DESCRIPTION	YEAR
Rutherford County forth_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Threatened Forest Levels	2009
Polk County forth_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Threatened Forest Levels	2009
Biodiversity and Wildlife Habitat Assessment	Primary Source	Description	Year
Buncombe County bwha_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Bio and wildlife habitat assessment	2009
Henderson County bwha_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Bio and wildlife habitat assessment	2009
Rutherford County bwha_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Bio and wildlife habitat assessment	2009
Polk County bwha_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Bio and wildlife habitat assessment	2009
Water Services Assessment	Primary Source	Description	Year
Buncombe County wsa_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Water services assessment	2009
Henderson County wsa_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Water services assessment	2009
Rutherford County wsa_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Water services assessment	2009
Polk County wsa_0709	NC One Naturally- Conservation Website	Water services assessment	2009





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